

When GOD'S THOUGHTS *Freebody*
Book The Gift of the Revd James Lyle
P E A C E I N W A R.

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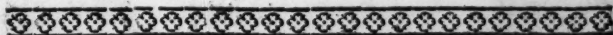
CONSOLATION OF THE AFFLICTED,

AND THE

AWAKENING OF THE CARELESS AND
PROFLIGATE.



Translated from the German of
C. H. v. B O G A T Z K Y,
Author of The GOLDEN TREASURY for the
CHILDREN of GOD, whose Treasure is in
Heaven.



L O N D O N :

Printed for A. LINDE, in Catherine street, in
the Strand, Bookseller to her Royal Highness
the Princess Dowager of Wales.

MDCCLIX.

Perusal of the work & Great war

479-1245



TO THE READER.

IT would be improper to detain the serious reader, by a long preface, from the profit and pleasure which the following excellent little Book will yield him. Indeed it is scarcely necessary to prefix by this short advertisement the reasons for reprinting it, as the very entrance into the book will shew its propriety.

The Editor found it among a parcel of old low-priced books in a book-seller's shop in London, and was prompted to buy it chiefly by the uncommonness of the title. It lay among his books unread a considerable time after his return to America, when affairs between our Parent-Country and her colonies began to have a serious aspect: so that it was after our present troubles had made some progress, that he became acquainted with the contents of this manual. But upon reading it, he discovered so striking a resemblance between the state of things which gave occasion for the author's writing it, and that attending our own nation and country; and consequently such an accommodation of its sentiments to our situation, that he immediately recommended it to the perusal of every thoughtful person of his acquaintance. It has been not only approved, but admired, by every such person who had the opportunity of reading it. And although the Editor has the pleasing hope, that many people have reaped benefit from this pious performance—as it has been out of his hands a long time, and circulating in the city of New-York; yet, as there was no other copy to be had, it could not become so generally useful as every Christian

Christian must wish. For these reasons it was thought expedient to re-print as many copies of the Book as were likely to be disposed of. And it is sent to the press, without certainly knowing that a sufficient number will presently be sold to defray the expences, though with a fair probability that the demand for the book will soon reimburse the charges.

If it would weigh any thing, the Editor could give the book his hearty recommendation to all orders of men; especially in this remarkable DAY OF THE LORD respecting our British realm, and the American colonies in particular. But it will avail more, to say, that several persons far superior to him in piety and learning have encouraged its re publication from the prospect of its very useful tendency. He will only add his hearty prayer to HIM who created the world, and gave HIMSELF to redeem it, that HE will be pleased to make the book effectual in our country to the ends for which it was written, viz. for the CONSOLATION of the AFFLICTED and the AWAKENING of the CARELESS and PROFLIGATE.

JAMES SATRE.

BROOKLYN, LONG-ISLAND,

JUNE, 1780.



GOD'S THOUGHTS OF PEACE IN WAR.

OUR lot is cast in such times, when both the temporal and spiritual judgments of God walk through the earth, yet amidst the general coldness and supineness they are attended to by very few, that God must call not only to the careless and sinners, but likewise to many teachers, *Awake thou that sleepest*, Eph. v. 14. *Awake, arise.* For the generality, and even some teachers, lie in a deadly lethargy without a single thought about their souls, and the salvation of them; others are in some degree, though not perfectly awakened; they are rather in a kind of slumber, without any clear light or sense of the danger of their own souls and those of others, and therefore do not *work out their salvation with fear and trembling*. But how can such stand in safety before the judgments of God; and God is now chastening the careless world and already the fire of war, as the minister of his wrath, blazes with *destructive* vehemence? Is it possible to be *careless now*? Who would indulge himself in sleep when his own or his neighbour's house is in a flame? Who will not readily arise and thank
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the person who awaked him? In like manner who will not at the fiery judgments of God awake from the sleep of sin, and let himself be cleansed from all carnality and worldliness, that he may deliver his soul and not be condemned with the world, or not perish amidst the judgments of God?

But even the wise virgins, the believers, and even true and wise teachers and servants of God, are often overcome with slumber; therefore our Saviour calls to them also, *Awake, arise*, 1 Cor. xv. 34. *What I say to you, I say to all, watch*, Mark xiii. 37. Here our Saviour would rouse all, and keep them continually alert and vigilant.

This awakening is daily necessary, as to all, especially to teachers, and they never can find themselves so awakened and strengthened, that it is not necessary for them daily to be continually awakening themselves more, and strengthening themselves in faith. They very well know what an awakened and upright teacher Timothy was, St. Paul himself giving him this character, *I know no man like-minded*.

Yet, in his second epistle to him, chap i. ver. 6. he puts him in mind to *stir up the gift of God in him*. If to this so upright bishop, and true disciple, it was necessary to stir up the gifts which were in him, and as it were continually be blowing up a fire smoking under the ashes, much more in our cool times will it be necessary for all teachers to be daily awakening themselves, lest the gifts they have received, instead of increasing as they should, decrease.

And should not the most faithful teachers every day thoroughly awaken themselves, and be continually strengthening themselves, and increase
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in the spirit of faith, when even Jesus, according to his anointed, and human nature, desired to grow and increase in spirit; and the Messiah, says, Isaiah, chap. i. verse 4. 5, *He (i. e. the father) awakeneth me every morn'g, he awakeneth mine ear so that I hear as a disciple. The Lord God has opened mine ear that I am not rebellious nor turn away back.* Oh how should not then every believer, especially every teacher, early every morning call to mind these words, and awaken himself, as it were anew, and from his heart pray,

Oh, like the sun, may I fulfil

Th' appointed duties of the day,

With ready mind and active will,

March on and keep the heavenly way.

Teachers are called shepherds and watchmen; watchmen on the walls, as Isaiah lxvii. verse 6. *I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night, and they shall think upon the Lord that there may be no silence among you, &c.* How therefore shall not such daily quicken themselves that they may be truly watchful and keep a strict look-out, that, at the first appearance of any danger, they may warn and awaken others, for if shepherds and watchmen themselves sleep, how shall the people, the poor sheep, be awakened and warned of their danger?

If ever there has been a time when to all, even the most faithful teachers, it was necessary to be thoroughly awakened, it is certainly the present, when God sends forth his judgments over the world, and permits the sword to commit such havoc among mankind: amidst such judgments and calamities of war, let faithful teachers chiefly attend to themselves, for they know from God's

word

word that the divine judgments begin at the house and sanctuary of God, as St. Peter says in his first epistle; chap. iv. verse 17. *For the time is come when the judgment must begin at the house of God. And if it first begin at us, what shall be the end then of them who obey not the gospel of God.* Accordingly faithful teachers are the first, who, amidst such judgments, enter most deeply into themselves, search their hearts and ways, humble themselves in repentance, and cleanse and purify themselves, and their whole house, from all the dross of the love of the world and a conformity to it, that they may not be first melted down by judgments, much less be condemned by the world; likewise that they may not be vexed by an evil conscience, or terrified by a servile fear, but rather, according to the divine promise, have joy in the day of calamity, and by prayer and supplication make *themselves as a wall, and be able to stand in the gap*, Ezekiel xxii. 30. Having thus first awakened themselves, they will not fail, according to the express command of God, and out of compassion and love, to labour likewise thoroughly to awaken their hearers. Therefore at the commencement of such visitations they faithfully admonish them or set before them their transgressions by which they have, as it were, forced God to threaten them with his vengeance, or actually to visit them, that they may not perish in their ir-repentance unadmonished, and their destruction may not in anywise be chargeable on their teachers.

They know that the Lord has bound up all the souls of their hearers with their soul, and will therefore require of their hands the blood of neglected and unadmonished souls, for amidst
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the miseries of war and other plagues, they call to mind the words of our Lord, as set forth by the prophet Ezekiel, chap. xxxiii. Son of man speak to thy people, and say unto them, when I bring the sword upon this land, and the people chuse a man from amongst themselves, and appoint him their watchman; if, when he sees the sword come upon the land, he blows the trumpet and warns the people; then, whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet and taketh not warning, if the Lord come and cut him off, his blood shall be upon his head. He heard the sound of the trumpet and took not warning, his blood shall be upon him, but he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul. But, if the watchman see the sword come and blow not the trumpet, and do not warn the people; if the sword come and cut off any among them, they are cut off for their iniquities, but their blood will I require at the watchman's hands. And now, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel, therefore thou shalt hear the word of my mouth, and warn them from me: when I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, if he does not turn from his way he shall die in his wickedness. So likewise chap. iii 17, 18. Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die for his iniquity, but

at thine hand will I require his blood. Therefore the faithful teacher thinks within himself, was it necessary to a prophet under immediate inspiration, that the Lord should more than once represent to him, how he was stationed as a watchman, and must warn the people, as otherwise he would bring on himself the guilt of their death and extinction; O then how much more necessary is it that I should have these words continually before mine eyes, and warn the people committed to my charge of their lost condition!

Faithful teachers will labour to preserve themselves and others from servile fear and despondence, withal carefully abstaining from shallow consolations, which only further intoxicate men, otherwise too careless, and confirm them in their supinity, that they may not be found among those of whom God says, Jer. vi. 14. *They comfort the people in their distress, that they should not lay it to heart and say, peace, peace, yet is there no peace.*

For thereby the salutary end of God's judgments is frustrated. The scope of God's vindictive justice is that we should repent, and with contrite hearts throw ourselves into God's arms and supplicate for mercy, that the punishments we have well deserved may be averted or mitigated; but when careless persons are, by empty consolations, encouraged to rest in this so wretched supinity, and to think that they have nothing to fear, that distress and danger are afar off, they continue in their sin and irrepentance, and at length may die and perish in them.

In general it is said of the wicked, that they imagine God's judgments to be far from them, as David, Psalm x. 4, 6. *The wicked, through the pride of his heart, cares not for God, God is not*

in all his thoughts, he goes on in the way of violence, thy judgments are out of his sight ; as for his enemies he puffeth at them, he says in his heart, I shall never be cast down ; I shall never be in adversity : and, if to this be added a shallow consolation from those on whom it is incumbent to admonish and reprove, supinuity gathers strength, and nobody awakes to consider himself, and call on God with a truly penitent heart, as in Is. lxiv.

7. There is none that calleth upon thee, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee. Such torpid security is a sure sign that God's judgments are near or present ; being by our Saviour himself noted as a presage of the approach of judgments, As in the days before the deluge, there was eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, till the day that Noah went into the ark, but they regarded it not, till the flood came and took them all away ; so also shall the coming of the son of man be. Matt. xxiv. 38, 39.

Our God first threatens us and gives us a distant view of his judgments, then gradually approaches them, yet not so as immediately to discharge his whole wrath on a nation, but being patient and long-suffering he gives men time and respite for repentance, and in his mercy often averts an impending danger. This patience and clemency of God should the more forcibly lead men to repentance ; but they frequently abuse the divine longanimity to negligence, and think that as God does not immediately send forth his visitations, and has turned away this and that imminent danger, he will always do so, and never punish them ; thus they go on in their security, proceed from sin to sin, and quite fill up the measure of their transgressions, as Solomon says,
Eccles.

Eccles. viii. 11. *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set to do evil.* For instead of seeing the abomination of sin they make light of it; from the long-suffering and clemency of God, they imagine him to be such as themselves, that sin is with him a light thing, and he will never punish them. Thus it is that such persons oblige God at length to employ his chastisements, as it is said Psalm l. 51. *These things hast thou done and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such as thyself, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes; and verse 22, mark this ye that forget God, lest I tear ye in pieces and there be none to deliver.* God will now awaken all to real watchfulness and repentance, for he will yet spare longer and not take away men in their sin: he will disperse all our enemies, and however great their power is, he will, as he is able, defend us from them; but he wills also that we turn to him, hearken to him and walk in his ways; accordingly he declares, Psalm lxxxi. 14, 15. *Had my people hearkened unto me, had Israel walked in my ways I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries; and Jer. xviii. 7, 8. At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil way, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.* Thus God is inclined to turn aside from us the evils with which he has declaredly threatened us, but we must turn to the Lord; that is indispensibly necessary, therefore verse 11. *Behold I frame an evil against you, and devise a device against*

against you, therefore return every one from his evil ways, and make your ways and your doings good. If this be done, God will rejoice to preserve us from harm; it is only turning to him with our whole heart. Further it is said, *but they say there is no hope, we will walk after our own devices, and we will every one do the imaginations of his own evil heart.* Thus men do not turn at all God's warnings and threatenings, and will not believe, that he is so displeased at sin; and likewise, as again, in Psalm xc. 11. *But who believes that thou art so angry, and who is afraid for thy displeasure?* Thus all sink deeper into security, till sudden destruction overwhelms them, till their own sad experience teaches them faith; then they are forced to believe that God is holy and just.

This security is greatly fomented by the innumerable false reports, whether good or bad, comfortable and joyful, or melancholy and discouraging. The first, the joyful false reports tend only to security, when, as in *Is. xxviii. 15. men make lies their refuge;* and thus are diverted from supplicating and calling on God only for comfort and assistance, as our sole refuge. Melancholy reports are also promotives of security; for men finding that so many melancholy accounts prove false, they come to believe nothing, even when danger and the scourge is already at their door.

Such being the security of mankind, that all are falling into a slumber; and even believers, the wise virgins themselves, are not able sufficiently to withstand the illapses of sleep, and keep themselves from every kind of security; it is fit that all well meaning teachers should arise, and use their

their utmost efforts for awakening others ; they should think I am called and am a watchman on the walls ; the Lord himself has placed me as a watchman over this people ; then must I first rouse myself to vigilance, circumspection and activity, that if all others sleep, I may not, but wake and watch to see whether any danger be near, and give notice to my people.

Faithful teachers not only are called, and in reality are watchmen on the walls, but they also are, and are called, messengers and angels of peace, as in Isa. xxxiii. 7. *Behold their messengers cry and the angels of peace, mourn bitterly ; and* chap. lii. 7. *How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring tidings, that publish salvation, that say to Zion thy God is King.* Well should true evangelical teachers think on these words in Isaiah lvii. 19. *I create the fruits of the lips ; peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near ; saith the Lord, and I will heal them.* Thus they know, that the message of peace must be their chief business, and, as at all times, so in the midst of war, and other divine judgments ; for as in all his judgments, so likewise in the most terrible wars God has *thoughts of peace ; he is termed, and is a God of peace, and has not only permitted peace to be procured to us at an inestimable price, Christ his son, and the redemption and reconciliation wrought by him, but likewise instituted the pastoral office to preach peace and reconciliation.* Therefore intelligent and faithful teachers, as messengers of peace, chiefly attend to explain and illustrate to the people God's pacific thoughts, and draw and intreat them, that they would repent and turn to this God of peace, reconciled to them through
Christ

Christ, and thus come to the only true, permanent peace.

Of God's *thoughts of peace in war*, as a most reviving subject, I shall now treat more at large. May the Lord, by means of his word, and thro' the emanations of his spirit, open his heart to me, that we may perceive what thoughts of peace he has towards us, amidst all the wars and commotions of the world, that with penitent and assured hearts we may rest on his pacific heart, and there find peace and tranquillity for our souls, amidst all the uproar of the world.

In these times I think we cannot be employed in a more necessary consideration, than God's *thoughts of peace in war*; for now, as all God's judgments, and particularly very bloody and wide spreading wars are breaking in on us; careless persons murmur against God, or against the instruments of his judgments, and thus make their sufferings and calamities worse. They do not consider the hand which smites them, that is, they do not think on their sins, by which they have forced God to visit them with his judgments, and thus look for the causes of their plagues in others, and not in themselves; and instead of repenting of their sins, increase them by their murmurs and impatience. Now, to such, faithful teachers will represent the words in which Jeremiah in the viith chapter of his Lamentations, calls upon the children of Israel, *Who then shall dare to say that this cometh to pass without the Lord's command? And that neither good nor evil proceed from the mouth of the Most High: wherefore doth a living man complain? every one for the punishment of his sins. Let us search, and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts* with

with our hands, to God in the heavens. We have transgressed and rebelled, and justly hast thou not pardoned us.

Is then nothing fallen out but by the divine order, and on this account, that we have sinned and been disobedient? Then is it an absurdity to exclaim against men, as they cannot go a step farther than God permits them, they being only his instruments. Thus when a depredatory people had invaded the Israelites, they were to look up to the Lord in a firm persuasion that it was God had delivered them up to such a people for their sins, according to the words of Isaiah lxii. 24, 25. *Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? Did not the Lord, he against whom ye have sinned? For they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his laws. Therefore he hath poured upon them the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle; and it hath set them on fire round about, yet they knew it not; it burned them; and they laid it not to heart. They did not attend to God; they considered not their sins, and did not lay them to heart, but murmured; and it is just the same now; in many places murmurings, complaints, and even invectives, are all one hears. But what do they avail? Is God's help and his favour to be obtained thereby? Is there no sin in thee? Now, as then, every one murmurs at the chastisement of his sins.*

Instead of murmuring and exclaiming against men, who are the instruments of God's visitations, let every one, mark well, every one, murmur against his own sins, accuse himself, and own that he has brought fuel to the conflagration of war. Hast thou not been proud and arrogant

rogant in peace? Now God, by war, will clip thy tow'ring wings. Hadst thou not a multitude of sins standing in thy debt-book, without making any account of them? Now God will bring thee to examine thy debt-book, thy register of sins, and settle accounts: Thus let every one immediately inquire into their sins, and consider their ways, and confess wherein they have sinned, and turn from their transgressions; this would be much better than impatience and murmuring, by which they only incur a greater guilt.

It is said, Isa. lix. 11. *We all roar like bears, and mourn (or coo) like doves.* Now, betwixt these, there is a difference; the latter coo, that is, pray with strong supplications; the former roar, or revile: Christians are to be cooing doves, and not roaring bears. Did Daniel exclaim against the Babylonians when they carried him and his people away into captivity? far from it, he acknowledges his own sins and those of his people, and says, *Yes Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face and to our kings our princes, our fathers because we have sinned against thee: to the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him;* and in ver. 13 and 14, he says, *We made not our prayer to the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth; therefore both the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth; for we obeyed not his word.* They who thus seek mercy, shall assuredly be helped, otherwise not. He who is insensible of repentance, and thinks not of his sins, which have drawn down this distress on him, but goes

on murmuring against God and men, only increases his calamities, and (Oh, that it may be seriously observed) moves God to deal more severely with him, as many may have woefully experienced in the present war.

For they who, amidst all these indications of his displeasure, do not look up to God and humble themselves, or do not acknowledge that they have deserved the chastisements of the punitive justice of God, move him, instead of the rod, to make use of the scourge and lash, or even to send fire and sword, he having other instruments of his wrath still more destructive. Surely then we should look unto him who has in his hand every instrument of desolation; for men being instruments cannot do what they will, but God is the Lord, it is he that does all things through them; therefore it is said, Psalm xlvi. verse 9. *Come here and behold the works of the Lord, what destruction he hath brought upon the earth.* Behold, it is the Lord himself who as judge works all this destruction, whilst men are no more than his tools or agents. Now let men acknowledge this, let them acquiesce in his corrections; let them, in true repentance, depart from their sins, for which God sends every chastisement upon them; let them likewise pray to God, especially, supplicate for mercy and forgiveness of sins, and be still and patient, and then they may be assured of being helped and relieved, according to Isaiah xxx. 15. *In rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength, and ye would not.* It follows, *and ye said no, we will fly upon horses, that is to Egypt, which we chuse for our helper.* For in the beginning of the same chapter, God says: *Woe*

to the rebellious children that take counsel but not of me, and that seek protection without my spirit, and thus add sin to sin. That go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth, to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharoah, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt; for the strength of Pharoah shall be your shame, and the trust under the shadow of Egypt your confusion, for it is said, verse 7, Egypt is as nothing, and its help is in vain. Egypt, indeed, would assist the Israelites, but its help, besides being fruitless, was detrimental, it proved as a reed which pierced through their hand, and so far from removing their distress, augmented it, as God himself says, Ezekiel xxix. 6, 7. Egypt has been a reed to the house of Israel, when they took hold of it, it broke in their hand and pierced their side, and when they leaned upon it, it entered their loins. This is the case of all helpers and auxiliaries called to succour without consulting God, and more relied on than God. But would man believe that God, among all the chastisements and plagues which he sends, has thoughts of peace, and intends thereby to awaken us, and bring us to repentance and conversion from all our sins, and therefore humble himself under his mighty hand, seek help of him alone, and first attend to the help of his soul, God would not fail in due time to give him also outward help and quietness, as should be most for our happiness. Thus, instead of murmuring at chastisements, we should be brought to praise God's paternal justice, did we but lay to heart that if he uses his rod, we have deserved it, and he chasteneth us for our benefit and the salvation of our precious souls.

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But believers themselves may by their disbelief, and the power of darkness, be assaulted to such a degree as to misapprehend God, and be bewildered in his judgments; looking on God only as a harsh God and inexorable judge; and be misled into a suspicion of God's paternal heart reconciled in Christ, by which they weaken their belief, disturb their peace, and fall into diverse troubles. Oh then how necessary is it, that, even amidst judgments and wars, we should learn from God's word better to know God's heart! for the word is as it were the window to the heart of God; so that it is only through this window that they are to look into God's heart, and judge of it, not from dreadful visitations, but from his word alone, and believe, that as the God of peace, he is always of the same mind; therefore, amidst all the destruction of war and all his judgments, he has thoughts of peace.

To these his thoughts of peace our God directs the thoughts of the captives at Babylon, Jeremiah ix. 11, 14. *For I know the thoughts that I think towards thee, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil. to give you the end you expect. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me and I will hearken unto you, and ye shall seek me, and find me: when ye shall search for me with all your heart, I will be found of you, and I will turn away your captivity.* Although our Lord God sent war upon the disobedient Israelites, and, in which, after many defeats, great numbers were carried prisoners to Babylon, yet, even amidst all this destruction and captivity, they were to believe that God had yet thoughts of peace towards them, and not of evil; that he would give them the end they expected, that is, the

the desired end of their sufferings and captivity: all required on their part was, to humble themselves before him, to call upon him, and implore his mercy, and he would certainly be found of them, hear their prayer, and turn their captivity, and bring them back to the place from whence he had suffered them to be carried away.

Agreeable to this is what the prophet Habakkuk says, chap. iv. ver. 2. *In affliction thou thinkest on mercy*; so likewise Isaiah, chap. xlviii. To the people of Israel, whose sins were many and enormous, and whom, on that account, God must purify in the furnace of affliction, he yet declares his peace, true and great peace; for though in verse 8. he sets before them their sins, yet, in ver. 9 and 10, he subjoins this consolation: *for my names sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that thou mayest not be cut off*; Behold! *I have refined thee, but not as silver*: *I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction*; and in ver. 18. he says, *Oh, that thou wouldst hearken to my commandments*; then shall thy peace be as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.

In like manner, God also promised this afflicted people peace and comfort, at a time when they conceived themselves quite forsaken by God, and that he had no thoughts of peace towards them, saying, Isaiah xlix. ver. 14 to 17. *For Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her suckling child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb, yea they may forget, but I will not forget thee*; behold I have graven thee on the palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me; thy builders shall make haste, and thy destroyers,

ers, and they that made thee waste, shall run from thee. So when destroyers and ravagers are, to all human appearance, destroying the church of God. yet is God full of thoughts of peace towards it, that he will support and build it up, and its walls are continually before his eyes, and he has graven them on his hands, that he cannot forget them: and to this purpose is also the following passage, in chap. liv. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee, in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. for this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee; for the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee; neither the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee. Oh thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and comfortless, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with sapphires, and I will make thy windows of agate, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones, and all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children. Behold, when we think that God has forsaken us, and has hid his face from us in anger, he still has thoughts of peace, and holds up to us his everlasting grace, his covenant of peace; and assures us, that he will gloriously build his church, and give great peace to his children. This is an invaluable promise, which relates to the New-Testament, and particularly to these last times; and such promises oc-

cur in all the prophets, where our God, amidst the afflictions of war, as in other distresses and calamities, discovers his thoughts of peace, concerning which, among others, may be consulted, the 31st, 32d, and 33d chapters of Jeremiah; and there we may have a true insight and observation of God's heart, of his readiness and delight to forgive us, and do us good.

Our God and Saviour also, amidst all kinds of calamities, thinks on what will contribute to our peace and welfare, would men themselves only think of it, and not be like obdurate Jerusalem, over which Jesus could not forbear weeping, *Oh, that thou hadst known in thy time, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes*, Luke xix. 42. These tears of Jesus, and even his menaces, shewed his heart, that it was full of thoughts of peace, as he still thereby called them to repentance, in order for bringing them to peace; for, as these tears were expressive voices, preaching repentance to the abandoned city, it became them to be moved to consider themselves, and mourn over their own sins, as Jesus himself was moved to weep over them, and the judgments which was to come upon them.

It was, according to Luther, as if he had said, Ah Jerusalem, didst thou but know it and believedst, that such misery was to fall on thee, thou certainly couldst not be so careless and impenitent; no, thou wouldst, with contrition and tears, think on the things which belong to thy peace, and supplicate God to spare thee: though, says Luther further, the Lord speaks only of Jerusalem, yet he intends, that thereby should be warned, and likewise threatened, all
who

who enjoy the word of God, and if not despise it, hear it without any fruit, that they should not be secure, nor entertain a vain confidence, that God would forgive a determined wickedness; as the Lord liveth, punishment will find them out, therefore to beware of all sins, especially of despising the word of God, or the time of visitation, that is, hearing sermons without any amendment; and whatever the preacher may remonstrate, exhort and threaten, continuing in the same impious course; such sins will most certainly not go unpunished, however, for a time, the chastisement be deferred, though our God, in threatening, or in the actual executions of his judgments, still has thoughts of peace; this is not to be understood, that he will avert, and turn aside all evil, war, and other calamities, or put a speedy end to them, and supercede them, by peace and prosperity, though men live as they list, though they remain in a careless wickedness, and whether they consider the time of their visitation or not, now, this would be no relief, no true salutary relief, to help us whilst we go on in our immoralities, accumulating sin upon sin, and consequently treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath; therefore it is, that God is for helping, so as to help us from sin, as the greatest evil, from which indeed, as from a noxious spring, all other evil is derived. In deliberate stubborn sinfulness, God cannot be in a covenant of peace with us, sin being offensive to him, and he punishes it; so that, if God has thoughts of peace towards us, so must we also have such thoughts, and walk in that blessed method by which we may be made partakers of his peace, his succour and deliverance; for, as he is a God

of

of peace, the God of all grace, and the father of mercies; he is also a holy, just, and jealous God; and, herein, we also find an answer to an objection when we think how can God have thoughts of peace in war, when so many thousands are so suddenly snatched away from life, or labour under painful wounds, and when cities and whole provinces, as the scenes of war, are afflicted with such a variety of calamities; events, the thoughts of which are dreadful, in which there is not the least glimpse of any thoughts of peace?

Now, that we may not be seduced by this objection, which in the sequel we will more particularly consider, we should first well lay to heart, that God, as he is merciful and long-suffering, so is he likewise holy and righteous, and we are not to separate his essential attributes. Thus he cannot as a merciful God shew thoughts of peace to man, so as to contradict his holiness, justice, and righteousness; all divine attributes being intimately connected, he is not like many mothers, who from a false fondness for a child, indulge him in all his idle humours; and who even, whatever wickedness he commits, must never be punished. This is a fleshly unsanctified love; but the love of our God is a holy love, which cannot countenance wickedness; therefore David says, Psalm v. 5. *Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness.* Perverse, wicked, and ungodly men he cannot love, and speak peace to them; for though God indeed in the above-mentioned place, Isaiah lvii. 19. says, *I create the fruit of the lips, which preach peace, peace;* yet he immediately adds; *The wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God,*

to the wicked. Such men are enemies to God, they do not seek the peace of God, they slight his friendship and communion; and therefore his holiness and justice, in regard to his word, oblige him to let loose his deleterious judgment, according to his threatenings; for, as a God of truth, his threatenings, like his promises, must have their accomplishment. Therefore, amidst all judgments, believers praise the holiness, righteousness, and truth of God; and say, *Thou art righteous O Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments,* Rev. xvi. 5, 7. or as in chap. xv. 3, 4. *Great and marvellous are thy works O Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou king of saints; who will not fear thee, and glorify thy name, for thou only art holy:* And in the xix. chap. 1, 2. *And after those things I heard a great voice and much people in heaven, saying, hallelujah, salvation and glory and power unto the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments.*

That our God may not be obliged to pour out his whole wrath, and that mankind may not be involved in the sentence of everlasting condemnation, he visits them whilst in this flesh with so many bodily and temporal chastisements; that being thereby awakened, they may avoid the judgment to come; that they may commune with themselves, and think on the things which belong to their peace. Thus his thoughts are still thoughts of peace, and he endeavours to deliver all who will be delivered. And though his judgments are far above our thoughts, yet we may, and are to believe, that he who is the judge of the whole world will do nothing that is unrighteous: to which alludes that fine passage

in the book of wisdom : *As thou art righteous thou governeſt all things in righteouſneſs, and thinkeſt it not ſuitable to thy majeſty to condemn any one who has not deſerved puniſhment.*

In war unbelief may object againſt God's having thoughts of peace that ſuch numbers are ſuddenly ſwept away, but we know that every ſudden death is not an unfortunate death ; for the Lord has a portion in all ranks, and likewise among the ſoldiery ; and many in ſo maniſeſt a danger of death, with penitent hearts, recommend their ſouls into his hands ; and all theſe ſouls God graciously takes into his hands, and they remain bound up in the bundle of life before the Lord, though they fall before the enemy by a ſudden death. And if great numbers are ſlaughtered and hurried away to everlaſting perdition, we are to believe that had God ſeen that they would have made a proper uſe of a longer reſpite for repentance, and have converted themſelves, he certainly would have dealt otherwiſe with them ; but as a longer life would have added to the number of ſins, and thus have filled up the meaſure of their puniſhment, by this precipitate end, he has only taken them from greater puniſhment. In ſuch ſudden judgments we ſhould alſo call to mind the words in Luke xiii. 7. *Hew it down ; Why does it cumber the earth ?* This is the caſe with many, who not only will not be good bearing trees themſelves, but likewise in the garden of the kingdom of God, hurt the good trees ; that is, ſcandalize or injure others ; and in the extirpation of ſuch, our God has thoughts of peace towards his kingdom, his ſubjects, who are his trees and plants.

And,

And, besides the destruction of the wars, are there not every day, and every where, throughout the whole world, many thousand barren trees suddenly hewed down, only we do not see it; though the number, at once, is not so great in one single place, as in obstinate battles?

As to those who are not slain on the spot, but are wounded and so as to die afterwards or lose their limbs, there is hopes that great numbers are brought to the knowledge of their sins, to repentance, and conversion: of this we have many examples both in those who have died of their wounds, or have suffered in their limbs; and in the last case let them lay to heart the words of Christ in Matthew xviii. 8. *It is better to enter into life, halt or maimed, than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.* As to the evils annexed to war, at present spreading over so many countries, towards all such countries and states, amidst all this apparent desolation, God is full of thoughts of peace; for all countries and towns, in all kingdoms and states of the world, our protestant church not in the least excepted, have exceedingly sinned; the generality making little account of God and his word, and few, very few, walking worthy of the evangelical religion. The spirit of free-thinking and naturalism, which in our time has pervaded so many places with such fatal infection, I omit; but how bare-facedly do whoredom, adultery, drunkenness, and other abominations stalk among us; especially iniquity, in all ranks; how universal is it in commerce and all manner of dealings, as if in the Bible or Catechism there was no such thing as an eighth commandment! and how do the rich and powerful oppress the poor!

ptor! whilst lulled in the blandishments of peace, none will move to take their part, which was particularly the sin of Sodom, as in Ezekiel, chap. xvi. 49. *Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom! pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness, was in her and in her daughters; but the poor and needy did she not help.*

How great and multifarious the dominion of sin is in our country, especially a want of honesty, and a contempt of the word of God; I shall not attempt to specify or determine: the Lord whose eyes are over all countries, and who sees into every heart, alone best knows this: but most heartily is it to be wished that during the profound peace we before enjoyed, the sins and groanings of the country have not really increased, instead of decreasing. We, at least the majority among us, have sinned in the same manner as other countries, where the war rages; possibly our sins, in some respects, are even greater, God having for above half a century past been pleased to supply our country, and especially our city, with so many faithful and able apostles; men who not only declared the purity of the whole gospel with great power, but walked before us in all holiness of life. We cannot plead that the way of salvation was not plainly shewed to us, that we did not, nor could know the council and will of God; but how few lent an ear to the messengers of God, and received the word of repentance; nay, many among the great and the mean, among the learned and illiterate, have even insulted these true servants of God, and scoffed at their admonitions: as the hardened wretches of Sodom treated Lot, *they laughed at them.* Is it any thing strange that
God,

God, at last, should come with his judgment to punish the despisers of his word, and shew that he is jealous of its honour; for according to Maccabees ii. 4, 17. *God's word is not to be made a jest, it will be at last found*; namely, that God, if not soon, at last punishes the contempt of his word, when men do not consider the time of their visitation, do not listen to God's true servants exhorting them to turn from their sins and truly repent.

We are not to comfort ourselves, that being members of the protestant church, and particularly living in a place where we have the word of God in its purity, that therefore we cannot fail of being protected by God: no, having the word of God in its purity, if we do not live accordingly, our sins are the more abominable, and our demerits the greater, as our Saviour says, Luke xii. 47, 48. *But the servant who knew his master's will, and hath not prepared himself, nor done according to his master's will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he who knew it not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whom much is given, of him will be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him will they require the more.*

If after God has through his messengers imparted his word to us in its clearness and purity, and caused repentance to be earnestly preached to us, no body repents; he has other preachers, he comes himself and preaches repentance with war and other plagues: this has been seen more than once, both in ancient and modern times. Even now to Germany, or rather to all Europe, does he preach repentance in this wide wasting war,

war, which likewise he ushered in with tremendous earthquakes. Our Saviour declares, Matt. xxiv. 7. *That there shall be earthquakes in several places*, and thereto annexes war and other plagues; and says, *all these are the beginning of sorrow*: this prediction also is entirely applicable to our times. And many children and servants of God were troubled in their hearts, lest the extraordinary earthquakes were the portents or harbingers of extraordinary wars, and so it has fallen out: for what a violent, may I not say unparalleled war, has this year 1757 seen? But who believed it then? Who laid those sins to heart? Who has attended to the faithful servants of God, and their penitential exhortations? The word of God is compared to thunder; now if men do not tremble, or are not awakened and moved by this thunder of God's word, God comes and shakes the earth with terrible concussions; and if at these, men will not rouse themselves to conversion, he sends war, and causes them to hear the thunder of the slaughtering cannon.

I have elsewhere mentioned an observation of the late professor Frank, in one of his penitential sermons, that previously to the thirty years war, the Lord sent the devout *Arndt* as a true and inflamed preacher of repentance; but few taking his words into consideration, or giving any signs of amendment, God seconded the preacher's admonitions with that long war; making Germany to know that he is an avenger of sin, and that the neglect of his word shall not go unpunished.

In our times God has sent not only one and another, but a great number of most serious preachers of repentance, and has caused us to be pathetically admonished of our corruptions, that
by

by a true repentance we might turn aside God's judgment; but how few have been brought to a holy dread of the divine anger, and have amended their ways; how, among others, has not the late professor Frank, lamented over this city, and warned our country; especially reproved the iniquitous dealings of men, and declared how God, at last, would come with his judgments, if men would not turn from their sins; and particularly their unrighteous dealings! Of this we meet with an affecting instance in his catechetical sermons, where, concerning the eighth commandment, he says, "Should I enter upon a detail of all the sins committed in this country and city, among all ranks, against the eighth commandment, all my catechetical sermons put together would not be sufficient for it.

"But it is not to be conceived, that our city and country can long remain exempted from the judgments of God; however, through his gracious loving kindness, he may for a while suspend them. Iniquity, oppression, avarice, and all kinds of sins against the eighth commandment, abound to such a degree among us, that the loud cry of them must ascend to heaven, and at length bring down from thence the thunder and tempest of God's wrath. If I, being advanced in years, should not live to see the chastisements, others will feel them, and recollect what I now say; but I fear they are nearer than we suppose. But what do I say? Nearer! they are already in the midst of us, so that great numbers cry out, *Woe, woe,* yet do not in the least think that it is a woe brought

“ brought on us by our sins, against this com-
 “ mandment, and a woe which may be followed
 “ by many more. This opens a large field for
 “ discourse, but I wish that every rational heart
 “ would within itself discuss the subject !” We
 may plainly see and hear the judge coming nearer
 and nearer in the full power of his judgments,
 provoked by the multitude and atrocity of the
 sins against the commandments, and especially
 against the eighth.

Now, how much nigher at present are not the
 judgments of God, and the plague of war? Nay,
 what is already seen in most of the German pro-
 testant countries? What has already fallen out
 there? And what will not ensue? Therefore
 great cause have we with penitent hearts earnestly
 to implore God that we may not have occasion
 to use the words in the lamentations of Jeremiah,
 chap. i. 14. *The yoke of my transgressions is*
bound by his hand, the load of them galls my neck :
he hath made my strength to fail, the Lord hath de-
livered me into their hands, from whom I am not
able to rise up : the Lord has trodden under foot all
my mighty men, in the midst of it he hath called an
assembly against me to crush my young men : the Lord
hath trodden the virgin, the daughter of Judah, as
in a wine press. For these things I weep, mine
eyes run down with water ; because the comforter,
that should relieve my soul, is far from me ; my
children are desolate, because the enemy prevaileth.
 This great evil, however, may even yet be avert-
 ed by a serious penitential prayer, as God chuses
 rather to pardon than punish ; for punishment
 and plagues are against his nature, but mercy and
 kindness is his proper work, unless we will ob-
 stinately proceed in our disobedience ; for it is

said in the 8th and 15th verses of the same chapter: *The Lord is righteous, for I have been disobedient to the words of his mouth.* Thus God, at length, indeed punishes those who rebel against his word, though he very long delays his chastisement; for were God to take no notice of actions, but permit every thing to go on without animadversions, it would be still worse, and God and his word would be more despised, or men would rely on a mere verbal profession of religion, yet in heart be void of any love or fear of God, living in all kinds of sensuality and unrighteousness; and in the time of temptation they would be ashamed of even so much as an outward profession, and openly cast off all religion.

The first professors of the evangelical religion ventured every thing on it, and with a joyful boldness professed the Gospel in the face of the whole world, and sometimes sealed it with their blood; but how it is at present, and how few such true professors are to be met with, is known to God: for to many, religion and God himself is their least concern: a deasing pleasure, a pitiful gain, or empty honour, is dearer than God and his word: how shall such be willing to deny themselves, and renounce any thing for the divine truth? It is rather to be feared, that in time of persecution they would deny God and his truth, and fall away by multitude; for it is said in Revelations xii. 4, even of teachers, who who are compared to stars; and *his (that is the dragon's) tail drew down the third part of the stars, and threw them on the earth.*

But our God now comes with his judgments, and sends war and other plagues; by which he certainly

certainly means to awaken all our protestant churches and cleanse his floor, that we may place a higher value on true religion, and the happiness of liberty of conscience; and converse more with God and his word, and not continue in our contempt of the gospel, and in obstinate disobedience, but move God that his judgments may pass from us, as they certainly come on all who do not consider the time of their visitation, lay to heart the things which concern their peace, and turn to him in true repentance.

Thus has God thoughts of peace for us, and we must have thoughts of repentance: therefore, as it is said Revela. ii. 5. *we should think from whence we are fallen, and repent*: for this our God, in war, often sends such plagues as have some connection and similarity with the prevailing sins, that men may be put in mind of them; accordingly it is said, chap. xii. 23. of the Book of Wisdom: *Therefore also thou plaguest with their own abomination the unrighteous, who lived an irrational life*; and in this God has also thoughts of peace: for men, in divine things, are so stupid, ignorant, and inattentive, that they do not apprehend or think wherefore God smites and punishes them; and of great numbers it may be said, *Thou smitest them, but they feel it not*, Jeremiah v. 3. They do not mind, or do not know, or will not rightly understand: and further it is said, *thou chastisest and smitest them, but they do not amend; their Face is harder than a rock, that they will not be converted*.

Therefore God, particularly in war, permits such calamities to befall men, which they must feel; he employs the *jus talionis*, or makes reprisals, and punishes men with that in which they
have

have sinned, or by which, as I have said above, they must be put in mind of their sins, and say, this I have deserved and drawn upon myself, by such and such sins; I have injured men in such and such a manner, as it was with Joseph's brethren: *they said one among another, this injury we did to our brother; in that we saw the anguish of his soul when he intreated us, and we would not hear him; therefore is this evil come on us, Genesis xlii. 21.* Likewise Adonibezec, though a Pagan, when his fingers and toes were cut off, his former cruelties returned to his mind, and he said, *Seventy kings, with their fingers and toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table; as I have done, so God hath requited me, Judges i. 7.* Thus God punished this heathen in the same manner as he had treated others.

How many have injured others, or even deprived them of life, and yet have found means to avoid the justice of the civil power; but the wrath of God cannot be avoided. Behold! the substance of such is destroyed in war, or they miserably fall in it: many persons, particularly those in high posts, and of large estates, have grievously oppressed their dependants; and, instead of succouring the afflicted poor, have suffered themselves to be hood-winked, and neither as judges or magistrates dealt according to reason and justice. Is it not then striking and admonitory, that when the Lord our God sends an army of enemies among us, such men should be treated as they have treated others? their partial ordinances and assessments to be reversed, the heaviest load laid on them, and frequently we see them cashiered from those offices, which they had abused with such oppression and insolence. The
poor

poor, alas! every where suffer most, according to the proverb *pauper ubique jacet*: for what is more usual among the rich, than in all imports, rates, and contributions, to make use of bribes for easing themselves, and throwing the weight on the poor. Thus men make taxes and aids, and the calamities annexed to war, still more burthensome, instead of easing each other; and thus are not awakened by God's menaces to depart from sin and unrighteousness, but rather aggravate their sins by all kinds of iniquity, and grinding the poor. But behold a strange people comes upon the nation, and it is the rich, not the poor, that these have in their eye, and they make other rates and partitions than had been made by the selfishness of the high and opulent in peaceable times, when they bore the sway.

One by all kinds of indirect measures has amassed an over-grown fortune, and loaded himself *with heaps of clay*; then what wonder is it, if the righteous Judge causes all this fortune, all this clay, to be swept away by the flood of war? Is it not a common saying, *that ill-gotten goods never thrive*; and does not the scripture declare and say of an unrighteous man, *Woe to him that increaseth himself with that which is not his. How long shall it last? Who ladeth himself with thick clay*, Hab. ii. 6. Another, who, if he cannot be charged with having scraped wealth together by flagrant iniquity, has hoarded it up with sordid parsimony, has been wanting in benevolence to the poor and necessitous, and of his great abundance has distributed nothing: But now comes a foreign commander, who, as merciless as himself, demands a large contribution: now must this miser bring out his bags of dollars, when,

when, before, the distressed of the poor could not get a few pence from him: now others must share with him, so as to leave but a small residue: formerly, secure in peace, he did not deal out his bread to the hungry, nor his drink to the thirsty, nor were the sick ever relieved by him; but in war he must deal out his substance by handfuls among foreign soldiers.

Another has built a costly house or seat by manifest injustice, or from a spirit of ostentation; or afterwards gross sins have been committed there, luxurious feasting, brutal mirth and debauchery; in war behold a party of the enemy suddenly surprizes him, and this structure, the pride of his heart, the scene of his vanity, is laid in ashes; and God, as it were, lights up a blaze, by which the punishment of unrighteousness and sensuality is seen far and near.

How many also have prided themselves in the grandeur of their house, and the richness of their furniture, or lived in sensuality and vain glory, and particularly guilty of great excesses in the glitter of dress and other ornaments; and instead of using the gifts of God to his honour, have abused them to sinful gratifications. Behold! the enemy comes on, strips the sumptuous edifice, and thus is the owner taught to be a better husband of God's gifts, and no longer abuse them to ostentation and voluptuousness! In this God only takes away the things whereby they sin, and thus hurt their souls, which are properly themselves; and all this is no more than mercy, or a judgment on the flesh; whereby God, according to his thoughts of peace, intends only to bring mankind to an operative knowledge of their sins, in order to the salvation of their souls.

How

How many, and particularly in the house of God, in the public congregation, have sinned by pride and irreverence; some do not so much as go into any place of worship, or soon walk out again; or if they have heard the sermon, if they have gone through the whole service, it is without any sense of what they are about, without any reformation; for after assisting at the external work, the remainder of the day is spent in idleness or festivity; Sundays and festivals they solemnize in gormandizing, gaming, and dancing, and this at a time when God's judgments have begun to make their appearance amongst us. These are absolute Sabbath breakers, prophaners of God's day and festivals, and contemnors of his word; whereas, after the example of the primitive churches, they should, during the favourable season of peace, edify themselves more and more; meditate more on God's word, and especially employ Sundays in devotional duties: but Sunday, abominable prophaneness! is the very day in which they most indulge their sensuality and irrational mirth. In the morning I'll suppose them at church, but the afternoon they spend at home or in their gardens, in the wretched alternative of eating, feasting, and gaming, and this is the course till late at night; and therefore the Lord permits that in war many Sundays and festivals prove days of terror and lamentation, and the public service cannot be performed, or with great disturbance; as, according to the public accounts, has been the case in many places, during this war. In war, likewise, is often fulfilled the punishment to the Sabbath-breakers, that

God

God kindles a fire in the gates, and the houses are consumed thereby, Jer. xvi. 27.

How many also had much rather see a play, than hear a sermon; and therefore God in war turns their comedies into a tragedy, their mirth to mourning.

And that men, in this war, may the better observe God's judgments, and think on their sins, he often employs such instruments of his judgments, sends such a people among them, with whom they had sinned, and of whom they have imitated not what was proper and commendable, but what is vain and sinful, as this our Germany has often experienced. When the people of Israel adopted the wicked usages of foreign nations, God suffered them frequently to be defeated by those very nations, and punished them with that which had occasioned their sins.

But those righteous judgments, in which God punishes by the cause of our sin, fall out still more frequently in war time, only they are not so well discerned, or are beyond our comprehension, unless the Lord himself directs our attention to them as an admonition, or for strengthening our faith, and points them out to us as the punishment of sins: for it may happen that the best children of God may not be totally exempt from the calamities of war, as I myself in these times have known afflicting instances of it, that I thought *If this be done to the green tree, what will be done to the dry?* Therefore we must retain a pious caution, and in many particular judgments, *join* not ~~form~~ any rash decision, but remember ourselves and think on Christ's words, Luke xiii. 2. *Think ye that these Gallileans, because they suffered this, were sinners above all the Gallileans?* I say

unto

unto you No, but unless you repent, you shall all likewise perish. Thus when God visits with his judgments families or individuals, not only the immediately afflicted, but also other cities, countries, families, and persons, whom these plagues have not reached, are to be warned; for God, by those stripes which fall on others, preaches repentance to those also, who have not yet felt the calamity: let them be wise at another's cost: let them repent and amend before it come to their turn; and therefore our Saviour again repeats these words: *Unless ye repent, you shall all likewise perish.* Thus all and every one, they who already feel the calamities of war, and they who as yet are spared, should amend, and turn the present war to the advantage of their souls; and this is touched upon by the late professor Franck, when in 1706 the Swedes invaded Saxony, great numbers of people fled hither. At present we hear a great deal of war, and the tumults of war. Now would we make a right advantage of this, let us attend to the inward war, then this outward war will do us no damage; and if it should damage us in the things of time, that is but a slight matter, as we shall very readily acknowledge when we enter into eternity: let us but manfully conflict against sin, and truly unite our hearts to God, then nothing in the world can hurt us in our souls (it is a noble saying) *aut sub cœlo, aut in cœlo, either under heaven, or in heaven!* So likewise let our hearts be turned to God, and we have nothing to fear.

Now, on this occasion, I direct my exhortation to all present here, who have fled to this *city on ac-
count

* Hall, in Saxony.

count of the troubles they met with at their own houses. I entreat they would carefully lay to heart what is at present said to them, and lift up their hearts to God, that they may not be dissipated and tormented by anxious thoughts which avail nothing, and by which I am confident their souls are not bettered: rather let them consider, that these are deserved chastisements, and humble themselves before the God whom they have provoked.

I do not say this as if here in our city we had clean hands, or have not deserved the like by our sins; and when our measure is full, the same will certainly be our case; therefore, be it known to us, that what God at present does to our neighbours concerns us also: let us therefore be warned, let us consider, for it is a certain truth what a heathen says, *nunc tua res agitur paries cum proximus ardet*. When your neighbour's house is on fire, beware of your own. Thus let us profit by the chastisements with which others are afflicted, and with all our hearts and minds repent and turn to God. This it is the more necessary to urge, as many of the inhabitants here may be apt to think that now they may make advantage of these strangers, and gratify their covetousness. But such ill gotten money will do its owners little good, it being a most abominable sin to add to the distress of strangers, whom domestic calamities have laid under a necessity of seeking refuge here. That is not right, and can never thrive; and if there be any one here who has sinned in this manner, let him forbear, and no longer offend God by such base cruelty. As the rate of houses, lodgings, and other things, were before, so in equity should it remain, and very far be it from any one to think I can make so much of this or that, what shall hinder me? No, that's the height of injustice! What
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thou wouldest not have done to thyself, do not to others. If you should be obliged to quit your home, and betake yourself to some other country, and the people there were for exacting and making a prey of you, how would you like it? Well, and as little must you use others so; therefore let the townsmen here beware of bringing down God's anger, by imposing on the afflicted.

But the strangers, on their part, who are come among us, must not think it sufficient to have fled their country; but devoutly bow the knee to him, who dwelleth in the heavens; lift up their hands, and pray for their country: let them supplicate the Lord God to pardon their sins, and those of their countrymen; and, in mercy, to turn away that wrath which their country has been treasuring up. They should carefully commune with themselves, and as David vowed unto the Lord, that he would not suffer his eyes to sleep, nor his eye-lids to slumber, till he had found out a resting place for the Lord; so likewise are they not to lie down in quietness, till their heart becomes a house and temple of God: then will the Lord turn away their calamity, and be a wall of fire round them and their country.

Of this they may be assured from the whole word of God; whilst the children of Israel feared God, nothing could hurt them, they had no wars to apprehend, were a terror to all their neighbours; but when they turned their backs to God, and sinned against him, they were given up a spoil to others; and wars were made on them with such success, that they were at last driven out of their country; but when they heartily turned to God, they were kindly received; God brought them back into their own country, and shewed them favour as before. Now God is still the same unchangeable God, and his pure
word

word teaches us that we are to look on sin as the ruin of nations, and families, and individuals.

Let me also recommend to the strangers among us that their trust in God do not faint ; from him let them derive spirit and fortitude. It is certain the temporal loss of many must be very considerable ; but they should think, that God, who can in an instant make poor, can also instantly make rich ; and, if it be for their good, he will restore every thing to them, or will preserve what is theirs ; and if it be not for their good, why should they, against his will, desire what is not for their good ? Therefore let them be of good courage, and instead of vexing their heart, cheer themselves with a spiritual song. Whoever is still weak in faith, let him read the holy scriptures, or edifying books, and diligently hear God's word ; and on reading or hearing of any thing comfortable, let him make such use of it as to possess his heart in an unreserved devotedness to the will of God ; for this is well pleasing to the Lord.

Strangers are especially to be put in mind, that they endeavour with all their heart and strength that they may return into their country amended ; and if, in their own country, they have been proud or luxurious, or lived in other sins, let them not return with those sins ; neither, whilst they stay, scandalize others in this country, whither they are come ; for it is said, Mat. xviii. 7. *Woe to the man, by whom offences come ;* but shew rather that the divine visitations have benefited them, and humble themselves before their God. In saying this, I am very far from discouraging any one ; I am rather for comforting those who are in affliction : but the way to true com-
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fort is truly to humble ourselves before God, and look on every thing as it ought to be looked upon. It is thus our God afflicts; it is thus he hears supplications; and it is thus he procures us rest, safety, and happiness.

Amidst all things, however, as we have said, God has thoughts of peace towards us; all his judgments being so many exhortations to repentance, by which he will convert us to him, as to the God of peace, that we may attend to his word of peace, and his word of repentance, and pay him an uniform obedience. Our God indeed usually and properly preaches repentance to us only through his word; but as few regard his word in true faith, he then seconds his word by his judgments, and preaches repentance by (as it were) realizing, and thus gives his word that energy which is necessary to make a right impression on obdurate hearts: for men will not repent at God's threatenings, warnings, and exhortations; and they will not believe that he is a holy and righteous God, who is angry at sin; therefore he at length comes with temporary and bodily chastisements, and manifests effectually that he is a holy, just, and righteous God, and consequently that he must be displeased at sin, and punish it. God has also threatened us here already, and has permitted one and another fear to come upon us, only in order to rouse us from our deep negligence; but he has graciously turn'd them aside, though most other places about us extremely feel the calamities. Yet in his long-suffering has he spared and restrained the tempest of war from discharging itself among us; and how comes this to pass? Is it from the slowness or the lenity of the enemy? Not at all. We have

have nothing to promise ourselves from that quarter; it is from God alone; the rage of the enemy is in his hands, and it is his merciful slowness, his patient clemency, which has spared us, and kept them back. But wherefore? I ask again, why? Because he still gives us time and respite for repentance, that his patience and long-suffering should lead us to conversion: therefore let us take heed of not again abusing this long-suffering, this keeping back the enemy, to irrepentance and security; for the black clouds of war are still impending over us. God has shewed us what he can immediately do, or permit: the rod has been brought very near us; let us amend, and most willingly will he farther spare us.

If it should please God farther to spare our city, or though we may not totally be without chastisement, yet if he still makes it such as we can bear, according to our position and confident hopes; yet it is not for the sake of the generality, but of his word and works; for the sake of his servants and children, who were earnest in their supplications; and likewise for the sake of the poor orphans, for the children and infants, in whom he is preparing himself a kingdom, and of whom a number is here instructed and maintained, some gratis, others at a very small expence, beyond any other place in Germany. The orphans have a particular claim, a particular promise, in the scripture, wherein he says, *I am a father to the fatherless.*

In this war the words of the late blessed founder of the orphan-house, Dr. Franck, have often occurred to me. For being asked why he built the orphan-house without the city, as, at any enemy's coming, it would be the first thing they destroyed; his

his answer was, When the sky falls there will be an end of us all ; but let a war come, and then we shall see which will protect the other, whether the city the orphan-house, or the orphan-house the city. The Lord give us this faith, and the grace of earnest prayer, and let us walk carefully in the steps of that faithful servant of God, then we shall see the glory of God, and experience what that good man spoke in faith, and declared beforehand, for comfort, and what he had already obtained by prayer.

Great numbers of children in other places pray for our city, and should distress come upon us, we might then apply to ourselves what the heroic Bugenhagen said from the pulpit, whilst Wittin-berg was besieged : “ Beloved brethren, pray
 “ in comfort ; be persuaded that all Christians
 “ throughout the whole world, who with us love
 “ Christ, and now hear of our calamitous cir-
 “ cumstances, are praying for us in Christ’s
 “ name ; and that, together with us, multitudes of
 “ other Christians are prostrate before the throne
 “ of grace, and fill the ears of the heavenly
 “ Father with loud and fervent supplications ;
 “ so that, even had we not the divine promise,
 “ it is impossible that we should not be heard.”

But if we become more careless, it is greatly to be apprehended that we shall, as it were, oblige God’s justice at length to strike us with his rod ; in order to disperse such a pernicious indolency ; for in all that he is at present doing on the earth, his end is to rouse careless, impenitent persons from their deplorable wretchedness, that they may care for their souls, earnestly strive after the kingdom of God, or rather make the care of their souls, and the attainment of the kingdom

kingdom of God their chief concern, their capital business, and not take up with an outward profession of the true religion; but let it inflame the heart, and direct the whole tenor of life. Would this had been done in peaceable times! *That in peace we had lived in all godliness and honesty,* 1 Tim. ii. 8. Thus it is that all orders among us should, like the primitive churches when in peace, have made use of that time for religious improvements; whereas the generality have abused the long enjoyment of halcyon days to negligence, pride and excess, have given God little thanks, especially for the enjoyment of the peace of religion, and freedom of conscience. Indeed some have mightily extolled the evangelical religion, and the purity of its doctrines, but with little real religion in their hearts; and instead of adorning the same doctrines with a holy life, are grown more careless and dissolute from time to time. And such was their security, nay even but a little before the calamities of war spread, that they looked upon it as an impossibility that war should come to their doors, and made a mere scoff of any declared apprehensions that God would one day punish their sins with war, as I have very lately been informed of a place, than which at present few suffer more by the war; it is not only in our city, but in most of the protestant territories, that the security and carelessness has been deep and general, and they would not be molested in their sins. In many all godliness is so extinguished, that it is allowed to be exposed in public writings as mere enthusiasm and fraud.

Therefore God has at length looked into it, and taken away that peace which was so heinously
abused

abused in forgetfulness of God, and malice against his religion. In Ezekiel xvi. God reproaches the people of Israel for their abuses of peace; comparing them to Sodom; nay, in verse 48, it is said, *As I live, saith the Lord, Sodom thy sister, and her daughters, have not done as thou and thy daughters.* And in ver. 49 and 50, he proceeds to an account of the sins of Sodom whilst in peace and prosperity; and says, in the words before cited, *Behold, this was the sin of thy sister Sodom, pride, and excess, and riot amidst the peace which she and her daughters had; but the poor and needy they helped not, but were vain, and committed abominations before me, therefore have I destroyed them when I began to call them to account.* As God is now taking an account, punishing the abuse of the happiness of religious freedom, and is making known in many Protestant countries how soon he can remove their candlestick, so he certainly intends only to awaken mankind to self-consideration, to commune with their hearts, to take a retrospect on the past course of their life, to repent of their sins, their pride, their unthankfulness, and iniquitous dealings; then will God most certainly shew himself gracious, and restore peace in our borders.

If he does not immediately conform to our cries for his mercy, yet is not this retardment to make us entertain any wrong thoughts of God, or question his thoughts of peace, or that he is deaf to our prayers: our God will certainly hear and succour, but in the time and manner that will be best for us; when we shall be helped, not only in outward and bodily things, but at the same time, and especially in things appertaining to salvation, and we shall be delivered

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from our sins. To be delivered from our worst enemies is surely the most glorious and most valuable assistance; therefore he would previously humble us, and detach us from all reliance on any arm of flesh, on the power and wisdom of man, that we may expect all our help entirely from him, the living God, and say from our hearts, *I lift up mine eyes to the hills, whence cometh my salvation: my help standeth in the name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth.* Psalm cxxi. 1. When we are able to overcome ourselves, that is, our confidence in ourselves, or in other creatures, and to put our trust only in God Almighty alone, it is a great step we have gained, an important victory, beyond taking cities, and subduing nations; as Solomon says: *He who overcomes his own spirit is greater than he that taketh cities.* Prov. xvi. 32.

Let us expect and seek all our help and victory from God, and rest only on his assistance. God is certainly with us; when we are willing to be with him; and is HE with us, in whose hands are all the creatures, and all the elements? then he has a thousand ways and means to help us, and give us peace and safety, though numerous armies hemmed us in on all sides; and the human eye sees no way for deliverance; for it is on this very account that God frequently deprives us of all those means on which, in our narrow thoughts, our deliverance seems to depend, that we should not trust to such means, but place our confidence on him, who can deliver without, or even by contrary means; now: whatever mighty power is now permitted to come against us, that we may make the supreme power of Almighty God our refuge. If we do so, the hostile power becomes

becomes small; and with one word he can disperse the hosts of the mighty. *Thou art stronger than the mountains of robbers.* Psalm lxxvi. 5. So God often frustrates the best concerted designs, supported by a force apparently irresistible, that the world may know that there is one above us who alone is wise and powerful, who wisely governs all things, whose counsel alone stands, and that we therefore are to call upon him that he will give us wisdom and forecast, as, without him, our own devices will more frequently do us more hurt than good: so that when we are utterly at a stand, when we see no counsel or means, within or without, that is the proper time for looking up, and pouring forth our supplications to him who is the Lord over all, without whose will no man can stir hand or foot to hurt us, and at whose command all creatures must be subservient to our benefit; for when we can no longer rely on any thing, but must trust God alone, instead of desponding, we are to thank God for it, and be persuaded that now he will signally help, and gain to himself honour; as it is from him alone we expect succour, and we will afterwards ascribe all the honour to him. This was the case in the first religious war; the Protestants, in the beginning, had numerous forces, and too probably might have placed their dependance on them; but they were defeated, and both their chiefs taken prisoners. Again, when the urgency became strongest, God, with a small force, effected a glorious and wonderful relief.

So, when we know not which way to turn ourselves in our calamities and dangers; but, as the above-mentioned Dr. Bugenhagen says, have only this in store, "That, O dear heaven-ly

ly Father, we can lift up our eyes to thee :
 all which men rely on we have richly had ;
 but it is that which hath ruined us, because
 we have relied on it ; for God, says he in the
 sequel, had taken away every thing from them,
 that they should have no comfort in the works
 of man, and therefore he thanks God, saying,
We thank thee, dear Father, for thy mercy,
that by this paternal chastisement thou hast com-
pelled us to trust only in thy mercy, and Christ
Jesus thy dear son, as thou informest us in the
first Commandment. Thus, dear father, is thy
will accomplished in us."

Now if we thus be as God would have us, so
 we shall have our God as we would have him,
 accompanied with help and salvation ; for when
 all human helps are afar off, or miscarry, and
 we are forced to rely on him only, then is the
 very season for him to help us, according to the
 words of a devout English divine* : " Many
 are apt to stumble when they see no outward
 means of deliverance, tho' with the words of
 promise in their hand ; they fall into such
 temptation, that, because no open way for
 escaping lies before their sight, they conclude
 there neither is nor can be any help for them ;
 and when to these temptations is joined a long
 delay of the divine succour, they grow quite
 dispirited : whereas we should think that
 means can never be wanting to God. Peter
 had good grounds, from his own experience,
 to say, *The Lord knows how to deliver the*
godly out of temptation. 2. Pet. ii. 9. Ways
 and means are always in his hands ; did his
 people

• Great duty of prayer for each other.

“ people but know how to pray aright, and he
 “ knows how to effect their deliverance. His
 “ wisdom is infinite to plan methods, his power
 “ is almighty to put those methods in execution,
 “ to accomplish his work, were he even to cre-
 “ ate them. He is the Lord of Hosts; his are
 “ all creatures, and all the elements. Whether
 “ it be by land or water that we stand in need
 “ of his help, he is Lord over all. Are we in
 “ captivity, he can open any prison; strangers
 “ and enemies, all things he can make to work
 “ for our good. Then consider not any appa-
 “ rent want of means, but look to his promise,
 “ as he can effect without means, and even
 “ against all means. Cast thy care on God, he
 “ will take care of thee. Art thou extremely
 “ poor? apply to him; there’s relief. Does sin,
 “ or any other trouble, molest thee? whatever
 “ it be, he can remove it, and set thee free.

“ But thou seest no means, and this dispirits
 “ thee. Did the church behave so in Peter’s
 “ case above-mentioned? Did they argue in
 “ this unworthy manner? Had we a friend at
 “ court to use his interest with Herod, or were
 “ there one of the guards whom we could bribe,
 “ or would the gaoler allow us access to Peter,
 “ there would then be some hopes; but now all
 “ human means whatever are wanting. To
 “ what purpose therefore should we pray? No,
 “ their faith was too sound for any such infer-
 “ ence; they knew that God had means invi-
 “ sible to us, and means which nothing could
 “ withstand. As it was out of the power of man
 “ to procure Peter’s release, an angel is com-
 “ missioned for it. Believe, and for thy deliver-
 “ ance he will either find means, or by his cre-

“ active power produce them. *All things are possible to him that believeth.*”

“ But so many difficulties appear in the way, that thy case seems desperate, that to talk of sufficient help to thee, is talking of impossibilities; but what obstacle can there be to him, whose word all nature instantly obeys? He is every where Almighty; no place is excluded from his dominion. Does thy exigency require greater power than that of Peter? Go to the prison, there thou findest him chained betwixt two others, with a strong guard at the door, a chain across the door, then the iron gate; but what are all these things to God? Peter's friends, under all these discouragements, continue in prayer; and behold God, through these and many other obstacles, interposes for their comfort.”

God also hears the requests of his children, and procures help, when, in appearance, our case is irretrievable; and then is he truly an astonishing helper, acting by contraries, and turning to our relief and advantage, what seemed in the highest degree detrimental; so that we afterwards ascribe all the glory to him, and say, *This hath the Lord done.* Then we shall own ourselves indebted to him for every thing; then we shall keep our thanksgivings, not with sensuality and frantic mirth, but with humble praise and acknowledgment*, and not extol our feats, but the wonders of the Lord, as David the great warrior did, Psalm xliv. 13. *Our own arm did not save us, but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour*

“ As was seen at the late thanksgiving.”

unto them. Thou art my king, O God, command deliverance for Jacob. Through thee will we push down our enemies; through thy name will we tread them under that rise up ^{us}; for I will not trust in *against* my bow, neither shall my sword save me; but thou hast saved us from our enemies; and put to shame all those that hate us. We pray indeed that the Lord, from whom alone cometh victory, will give courage to our army, and let his fear go before it; that is, as in Samuel, chap. i. 14, 15, a very great trembling, a trembling from God; for it is the God of armies who alone gives courage to heroes, and takes it away; he cuts off the spirit from Princes, and is terrible to the princes of the earth. Ps. lxxvi. 13. That the mighty men become as women, i. e. faint and fearful, Jeremiah li. 30. That is a formidable army indeed, where God himself performs wonders, before which go the terrors of the Almighty, and follow their enemies; and such an army will own their help to be only in the Lord; will ascribe to him the victory and all the honour, and set their hands to the truth of what Solomon says, Prov. xxi. 30. 31. There is no wisdom, or understanding, or counsel against the Lord. The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord.

If many, though not all, so far gain upon themselves as to depart from their lamentable negligence and impenitence, and cleanse themselves from other sins; so likewise from idolatry, from all false confidence in man, and expect help and victory from Almighty God alone, the only creator of the heavens and the earth, and from the heart declare, *Assur*, (that is, this or that power) shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of

our hands, ye are our gods : in thee the fatherless find mercy, Hosea xiv. then will God send help, and shew that his thoughts to us are full of peace, though he conducts them and brings them about by wonderful ways : For the Lord is wonderful in council, and glorious in working.

When God threatens a country or town with destruction, but the inhabitants betake themselves to self-consideration and repentance, he in mercy withholds the denounced judgments, and shews favour to the penitent sinner. Of this we have a distinguished instance in the great city of Nineveh. So God once threatened the children of Israel, that by reason of their idolatry he would no more go forth against their enemies, and assist them, as it stands in Judges, chap. x. 13. *Now ye have forsaken me, and served other gods, therefore will I no more help you. Go, and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen ; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.* Yet, when they repented of their sins, and called on him for help (but also put away their strange gods) he was not backward to relieve them ; for it is said, ver. 15, 16, *And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned ; do thou unto us what seemeth good unto thee, only deliver us, we pray thee, this day. And they put away their strange gods from among them, and served the Lord, and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.*

These strange gods are all those creatures which we fear, love, or rely on, beyond or equally with God, or cleave to them with our hearts ; and of these strange gods there are too many to be seen among professors of Christianity, and even in our evangelical church ; though our idolatry be not so stupid as to fall down before
images

images and stones. Now if, in true repentance, we put away these strange gods, and implore the Lord's assistance (for they must both go together) God also will certainly pity our distresses, and give us signal proofs of his loving-kindness: but repent we must, and depart from all idolatry and ungodliness; for God has affirmed that he does not desire the death of a sinner, but he will not allow us to continue in sin. That we must be converted and repent, is what he has also affirmed, Ezekiel xxxiii. 11. If we repent, and are converted, we shall live, otherwise not; for to violate his oath is not in the nature of God. We have at present great need to think on St. John the Baptist's words, Matth. iii. 8. *Bring forth fruits meet for repentance.* And v. 10. *The ax is laid to the root of the tree; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.* The ax is already laid here, that if we do not bring forth the right fruits of repentance, the consequence is, to be hewn down and burnt.

Our petitions for help must be penitential petitions*; in which, like Daniel, we must acknowledge

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knowledge

* *It is from the heart that we must pray. Many, in their prayers in the hours of distress, say not a word of repentance and conversion; could it then be thought that they are in the heart? Wretched stupidity! One would think they imagined that repentance did not belong to them; at least they pray like a people that do righteousness, and who have not forsaken the ordinance of God. Such, to be relieved, must bring themselves to pray in another manner; for what Judith says, chap. ix. 13, is an everlasting truth: The proud thou hast in abomination; but with the humble prayer of the distressed thou art pleased.*

knowledge our iniquities before the Lord, and turn to him from every abomination; the former will not do without the latter. A prayer for help, without repentance and conversion from sin, is not acceptable to the Lord, and will not be heard: for to go about praying away a calamity, and not the sins for which God has sent the calamity, will never much mend our condition. Whilst there are sins, wretchedness will follow them close at their heels. Such prayers imply an absurdity. Therefore let us first with penitent and contrite hearts pray for remission of sins, and depart from every abomination, from all strange gods, and from all secret curses, otherwise there is no standing before the enemy. This God himself said to Joshua, Josh. vii. 23. *Our sins shall fight against us, and furnish the enemy with irresistible arms.*

To this purpose the above-mentioned English divine goes on: “ Our enemies are many and
 “ powerful, and our innumerable sins give them
 “ further advantage over us. Every sin forwards
 “ their pernicious designs. God has hitherto
 “ declared for our enemies; in chastisement for
 “ our offences he has assisted them; yet we sin
 “ on with a frenetical hardness, as if we were
 “ void of all thoughts that a continuance in sins
 “ will occasion the continuance of our disgrace.
 “ Amazing! that so many judgments have had
 “ no influence on us! Still no general repentance
 “ nor departure from sin is seen among us. The
 “ season is now come, when, without any
 “ amendment in our morals, we are again making
 “ vigorous preparations for sending fleets
 “ and armies against our enemies; but in vain
 “ do we expect any success, whilst by our sins
 “ we alienate God from us, and provoke him
 “ still

“ still to make our enemies the scourges of his
“ justice.”

This likewise demands our attention. Would we that God, instead of being against us, should declare for us against our enemies, then we are not to fight against him by sinful courses; but humble ourselves before him, and put away every thing which may provoke him to anger; then we can properly pray for his help, and may confidently assure ourselves that it will come, and in the best time. This we may plainly see in the before-mentioned chapter of Judges, the people Israel not only cried unto the Lord, but put away the strange gods from among them, and then the Lord had pity on them. It was the same with the Ninevites; they, besides praying and fasting, turned from the violence of their hands, and every evil way, as it stands in Jonah, chap. iii. 8. *The King caused it to be proclaimed, that they should cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence of his hands.* There was both crying and weeping, but there was likewise turning from the violence of their hands; and this violence of the hand particularly imports all iniquitous dealings, together with many other sins committed by the hand, and among these may justly be included licentious books, the hand being the chief instrument in them.

From all these violences of the hand we must absolutely turn away; be cleansed and sanctified from them; and, *lift up holy hands*, they are St. Paul's own words, 1. Tim. ii. 8. and how can we with any confidence lift up our hands in prayer, when with them we habitually commit all kinds of sin and unrighteousness? Therefore St. James

iv. 8. 9. exhorting us to prayer, or to draw near to God, says: *Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you: cleanse your hands ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.* Thus the hands, but also first the heart, must be purified from all sins and worldly tempers; not only from gross sins, but we must humble ourselves for the depravity of nature, the abomination of original sin; and with heart-felt contrition make Christ our refuge, as the sole reconciler, and mercy seat; and, in this manner only is it that we can obtain mercy and peace in our hearts; and then likewise we may properly supplicate for temporal quiet and preservation from calamities, and the Lord will help and lift up the light of his countenance on us. Would we, according to God's thoughts of peace, also obtain outward peace; we are first to seek the inward true spiritual peace, peace with God; and indeed we are to be more concerned for this peace and friendship with God, than for meer outward peace, though this be no slight benefit; but to be in a covenant of peace with God, to know assuredly that God is our friend, our reconciled father in Christ, all whose thoughts towards us are peace and love, this is felicity beyond expression: such being our state, we may, amidst all the outward tumults of war, preserve an inward calm, a quiet heart; we may say with the Psalmist, *I will lay me down in peace, and sleep; for thou O Lord only makest me to dwell in safety,* Psalm iv. 9.

But he who is desirous of having this peace with God, must not think of continuing in his person

person an enemy to God; that valuable friendship must be sought by totall renouncing and abstaining from every appearance of evil, as offensive to God. He must not only turn from the violence of his hands, from glaring iniquities, from gross sins, but be cleansed from his carnal disposition, which is conversant about, drives after, and relishes those things only which please the flesh. Such carnality is enmity with God; whilst that rules, there can be no pleasing God, no peace with God: for St. Paul Rom. viii. 7, 8. expressly says, *The carnal mind is enmity against God; they that are in the flesh cannot please God.* In verse 6 it is even said, *To be carnally minded is death*, spiritual death; the consequence of which is eternal death; as likewise in verse 13, *If ye live in the flesh, ye shall die.* Sensuality, living according to the flesh, brought the deluge on the old world. It is not said of the Antediluvians, that they lived in flagrant enormities, in atrocious sins, such as are at present in vogue; but only that they were sensual, walked according to the flesh, in supinuity and indulgence; would not be taught by the spirit of God, or lend an ear to Noah, the divine preacher of repentance; all their thoughts ran on temporal enjoyments; they were so taken up with eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, that the things of eternity were quite out of their mind; and thus they were swept away by an unparalleled catastrophe. Thus also the foolish virgins are not described as vicious dissolute persons, but on the contrary were outwardly virtuous, associated with the pious. They made a profession of Christ, or the true religion, and behaved decently. They even went forth with the
others

others to meet the bridegroom, and yet the door was shut against them; for, amidst all their external decency, they were supine and negligent, and carnally minded; for they had not the oil of the spirit, no true living faith, but rested on a meer appearance of godliness, and too late gave themselves any concern about the oil of the spirit; thus their carnality, to them likewise proved destruction and everlasting death: in them also was accomplished the saying, that *to be carnally minded, is death*; and in the wife was also made good, what immediately follows; but *to be spiritually minded, is life and peace*; and in ver. 13, *But if through the spirit ye mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.* Are we then desirous of life and peace with God, then we must lay down all fleshly tempers, no longer live according to the flesh, but be spiritually minded, put on a new, spiritual and divine frame of mind, be born of the spirit in heart, soul, mind, and all our powers, become quite other persons; or from the heart be obedient to the word of God, and walk in the narrow way; and this likewise will be the means for obtaining bodily peace and safety: for as we have already mentioned, our God has expressly declared, that were we obedient to his word, did we walk in his ways, he would soon bring to nought our enemies, or incline them to be friends with us: for to him who is in a covenant of peace, in friendship or communion with God, and who lives a godly life, no enemy can do any hurt, as St. Peter says: *Who can do ye harm, if ye be followers of that which is good*: such a person takes the right method for peace, he diligently endeavours after it, and obtains it. And thus, namely, by a true conversion to God, would

would all men, in all ranks, labour after internal peace, and promote the works of peace, it would much more promote national peace, than any pacific schemes merely human. Pacific schemes are often set on foot, and national peace is often the subject of long congresses; yet after years they have been known to break up without effect, particularly in the thirty years war. What retards national peace more than the sins of countries, who, instead of seeking peace with God by true repentance and conversion, despise his overtures of peace?

Would men of all ranks close with this gracious proposal of peace from God, that they should turn to the Lord, then would all ranks, with united strength, prepare themselves, and say: *Come and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us: he hath smitten, and he will bind us up,* Hosea, vi. 1. The clergy, as in right reason they should, would then set the example of more earnestly seeking peace with God by true repentance; and with tears and supplications implore help and forgiveness, as in Joel ii. 17. *Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thy heritage to a reproach, that the heathen should rule over them; wherefore should they say among the people, where is now their God?* Here God himself lays down a penitential prayer and supplication, the more comfortable, as it will certainly be heard, God himself having put the words into our mouths. Thus let not only all teachers and divines, but likewise all professors in universities, of every faculty, turn unto the Lord, and go before others in setting a good example;

ample; and as the students of divinity are so indefatigable to prepare themselves to become messengers and angels of peace, they will previously, in the order of true conversion, endeavour after the peace of God.

The magistracy will consider what we pray for, namely, that God will give to all sovereigns and magistrates, peace and good government, that they may govern the people under their charge with wisdom and equity, and properly consult their temporal welfare. Now a good government, a prosperous administration, is only to be obtained by the rulers and magistrates giving themselves up to be guided by God; or when the fear of God holds the helm of government, when magistrates and placemen preserve a clear conscience, and clean hands, abhorring covetousness, taking no gifts, and being in their stations, such as Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, recommends to him, Exodus xviii. 21. *Provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God; men of truth, hating covetousness.*

The merchants, tradesmen, and the commonalty would in their turn second these endeavours for peace; and instead of striving to amass money by wickedness and iniquity, and making earthly things their sole pursuit, would first strenuously seek the kingdom of God; this, according to Christ's plain words, would produce every other kind of peace and security, and consequently that of the body and property.

The latter class make a clamour about the badness of the times, and the deadness of trade, but who complains of his corrupt heart, his wicked life, and of spiritually dead times: better times are to be had only by becoming better
men,

men, by making christianity, the kingdom of God, the salvation of your souls, your main view, your capital endeavour; for, among the generality, it is but a collateral concern, a thing by the bye. Alas! how many are so absorbed in an unfatiable pursuit of the the things of time, that they never have one serious thought about their souls and eternity: uncertain wealth, empty honour, debasing pleasures, are pursued with a giddy eagerness; whilst the care of the soul is laid aside, till the terrors of a sick bed *was* rouse it, as if this ~~was~~ a matter of small importance, and could easily be dispatched.

Infinite joy, or endless woe,
Attends on every breath;
And yet how unconcern'd we go,
Upon the brink of death.

From this deplorab'e torpor, God, by the present war, would awaken men of all degrees, and especially our protestant churches, whom it most concerns to lay these admonitions to heart, and at length to think on the things which belong to their peace; therefore it behoves us to mind God's gracious end, to forward it, and amend ourselves. This let every one do without delay, and not wait for an example to be set to him; rather let every one think thus: though none should mind God's admonitions and amend, yet will I pray to God that he would give me true repentance and amend me; that we, at last, may answer the gracious ends of his judgments.

Very few enter into the causes of the war, and God's views in it: they think it was so from the beginning, and so it ever will be: with them ten or twenty thousand men killed or wounded in a battle, is a trifle, it being no more than customary;

whereas if only two or three are killed

(61)

by any sudden accident, they express a great deal of concern! Others look on peace or war as merely fortuitous, without a single thought of God as a righteous judge; and the successes and disadvantages are attributed to one accident or another; whereas they should believe, and they may be assured of it, the cause of war, and every other calamity, is sin; this is the right point of light in which they are to behold calamity; let them repair to a field of battle, and survey that horrid spectacle, that cannot but bring them to own the abomination of sin; and that, especially in regard to war, the wages of sin is death.

Others imagine every thing depends on men, and that in their hands are war and peace; but our God says, in Isaiah xlv. 6, 7, *I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light, and create darkness*; and our Saviour says, Matth. x. That without the will of his Father, not a hair falls from our head, they being all numbered; much less does any great destruction come to pass on earth, without his permission, or, I may say, direction: if he creates all things, and all things proceed from him, then must he in all things, and consequently in the calamities of war, have his gracious purposes; and thus it behoves every one, within the reach of such calamities, to attend to God's purpose, and reflect: why is this evil befallen me? Wherefore doth God send it on me? He sure'y intends to awaken me, to bring me to the knowledge of my sins, and to repentance; let me, with the lost son, commune with myself: let me for once be of a right mind, and ask myself: How is it with me? If I die in my present condition, can I hope for salvation? Does not such and such a sin bear dominion over me?

me? And under such can I appear before God's judgment? Therefore, according to God's holy purpose, I will arise and turn from all my sins: Now, if all, or only many, thought in this manner, and diligently, as at Nineveh, prepare themselves to seek the Lord, then would he also look on us as his chosen Israel; for he has given us that inestimable jewel his word, and still dwells among us.

Did we amend ourselves, very certainly would God look with pity on the many protestant countries now greaning under distresses; God does not delight in plaguing and afflicting the children of men, but only intends their amendment. In us let his views be accomplished, and let us amend ourselves, and then his delight will be to do us good; but especially will he protect and keep up among us his church, his kingdom, and work. At present, according to the before cited forty-sixth Psalm, he works so great a destruction upon earth, and by his judgments is preaching so powerfully, that he certainly has in hand something great and good; that is, for his church and congregation, for the city of God, and thus for every particular member of it, for all the faithful.

Thus the faithful, in a particular manner, may, and should think, that to them God's heart is full of, overflows with, thoughts of peace; and that, amidst all the disturbances of war, he has an eye to their safety and happiness; consequently that he will give peace to their souls, and maintain it uninterrupted; and it is the disturbers of inward quiet, disbelieving cares and dissipations of the mind, which they are more to be afraid of than of the outward disturbances of war.

These

These dissipations and mental confusions are, in the present juncture, much promoted by an excessive curiosity in politics, by a fondness for hearing and reading the public papers! On this account, in a certain place, several devout persons have entered into an agreement that they wou'd read or talk of the events of this war, no more than is necessary, to excite themselves to prayer, and strengthen their faith: they are more desirous of employing themselves about Christ, their prince of peace, of learning from his word to know him better; and certainly he who gives himself up to an employment so acceptable to God, who by faithful prayer is continually seeking the peace of Christ, shall not be much diverted from this consolatory and strengthening exercise, by war or other worldly commotions, it being a delight to God when souls desire and embrace his peace; and of war itself, with other calamities, the end is, that men should be awakened and seek after peace with God; it is not to be thought that God with-holds from them this communication of peace, or renders them incapable of it. Now, if we seek to obtain peace with God and Christ, and shut our heart against all spiritual disturbers of our quiet, and be continually sending forth supplications before God, in his secret tabernacle, and as it were in his audience-chamber, then may we, amidst temporal convulsions, sit down at his feet in rest and tranquillity; for the children are with the father, in his chamber, even in his heart, for he himself was pleased to say, Isaiah xlv. 3. *That we were born by him in the body, and carried in the womb.* This father is the Almighty God, who can protect his children against all men, against the

very

very gates of hell, and no enemy shall be able to dislodge them from God's heart, which is their secure fortres: rather outward disturbances shall only drive them with greater eagerness to God, and Christ their prince of peace, and cause them more closely to attach themselves to Christ, from the experience that out of him there can be quiet; but in and with him they have continual peace, and *the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keeps their hearts and minds*, as a strong garrison keeps the city, that, in the midst of war, they have security, protection, peace, and tranquility! therefore is it a peace that passeth all understanding, and not like the peace of the world, which depends on thriving affluence, and living as one lists: but this peace of God keeps us calm and serene, when all the world labours with commotions; for the faithful live in the true city of peace, which is the residence of Christ, the prince of peace, who is himself their peace, a peace which cannot be disturbed, though the mountains were removed and cast into the sea.

Do believers feel any calamity? Or are they assaulted with many fears, and think that as judgment begins from the house of God, so it may come their way? Yet they know it to be no judgment in wrath, but only a judgment on the flesh, their remaining carnal tempers, on the relics of idolatry, and their attachment to temporal things, to the creatures from which the Lord intends now to purify them; this is pure mercy and favour, God being angry, not with them, but with their enemy, with sin, and will deaden it more and more, for this is what themselves earnestly supplicate.

Create

Create my nature pure within,
 And form my soul averse to sin:
 Let thy good spirit ne'er depart,
 Nor hide thy presence from my heart.

So that the faithful, amidst all the burthens, disturbances, and havock of war, desire to repent and cleanse themselves more and more from all love of the world, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; they desire to be the first, as shining examples among those who are now improving their repentance, and put away all strange gods that may have lurked in them, who are securing their hearts better, that nothing may again greatly intrude itself there to pollute their devotion, and disturb their quiet.

Particularly, they will now pray with more fervour and faith; and as for themselves, so likewise for others: to this even the very calamities of war will move them; for though frequently the prevailing sins of the country seem to hinder such faithful prayer and intercession, yet they know the divine command, that they are to pray for all men; and that it is good and acceptable to God, as our God *would have all men to be saved*, and has given his son for a redemption of all, 1. Tim. ii. 6. If other secure persons do not prepare to seek God, and are hardened against religious consideration, and are dumb with regard to prayer and supplication; yet they will be a mouth for these dumb wretches, and the more earnestly pour themselves out before God, that he will give to such a lively repentance, and a heart and mouth for prayer: they think, that as the sins and abominations of careless persons cry against them to God, they, in the communion of the blood and intercession of Christ

Christ which cries for them, are also the more to cry for them; for the blood and intercession of Christ drowns all the clamours of sin and Satan. The greater the spiritual and bodily distresses, the greater should and will be our compassionate love, and consequently our warmth and eagerness in prayer, by which we may be happy instruments to help our miserable fellow creatures in their wretchedness! Let us only conceive that every one of these persons in such a deplorable situation cries, come and help us; this can, and certainly will be done, if we pray for them; in doing this we procure a blessing for our own souls: it is a holy exercise and furtherance of faith and love, and we thereby acquire a most sure testimony of our state of grace; fervent prayer for others, especially for their spiritual welfare, evidences the purity of our hearts, and the best love to our neighbours. And what may we not expect, if we plentifully sow the seed of our prayer, and intercession for all men? And we shall hereafter see that our prayer, weak as it appeared to us, has yet contributed something to the saving of many souls; and thus this time of military disturbances is, to the faithful, a season full of blessings, a happy seed-time, which will be succeeded by a rich harvest.

Thus nothing, by whatever name it be called, should hinder us from prayer and intercession for others; faith and love being two wings which soar above all impediments, all offences, all sins, they pray for all men, as the Saviour himself on the cross prayed for those who crucified him; faith looks to the blood of Christ, which preponderates against all the sins of the world, and love covers the multitude of sins. If we faint, and

are inclined to tire in our intercessions for a sinful people, our faith and our love is still weak; we are deficient in the knowledge of the compassionate love, patience, and long sufferance of God; we do not sufficiently consider with what exceeding patience God, in former times, in our sins, bore with us, and how we ought to lay to heart the patience of the Lord for our salvation, as in Isaiah lxxv. 2: *God himself says, All the day long have I spread out my hands unto a rebellious people, of whose great sins he gives an ample description; yet has he patience with them, and the whole day, that is, during their whole life, he stretches out his hand to them, that is, would still draw them to him. Does God, the righteous judge, in his great patience, stretch out his hand the whole day to a people laden with iniquities? O let us not be wanting in patience and compassion to lift up our hands in prayer for a disobedient people without fainting, and we are not to doubt of being heard, and obtaining help; however impious a man be, we are not to despair of him, nor are we to cast away our confidence, though sin, and calamity, the punishment of sin, be at the highest pitch; the greater the sins are which cry against a nation, the greater the calamities are which we behold, these should only increase our earnestness in prayer, render us more ardent in our intercessions for such a sinful nation; and its sins, so far from deterring us to pray for them, should the more incite us, there being the greater necessity; and if satan can plunge mankind deeper in sin, much more can the spirit of God awaken believers to prayer; that at length satan's machinations will be certainly baffled, and God obtain the victory.* We

We indeed frequently hear of new crimes and enormities, which naturally make us backward in prayer; but let them animate us to fervency and perseverance, and in this respect we are, as it were, *to gather figs from thorns*; that is, the more sins cry for vengeance, we are the more to cry for grace: “granting,” says the above English writer, “that the sins of our country cry aloud for vengeance, then let our prayer for mercy be still louder. Elisha stands up for stiff-necked Israel, and Amos for rebellious Judah, and the Lord shews mercy; but Elisha and Amos were men like ourselves: let us therefore be animated by their example, and even with the like importunity insist at the throne of grace; while God is pleased to allow us an hour for prayer, let none despond as though it were too late: our danger is certainly great, yet whilst God calls in his word, it is not too late to call upon him in prayer, he often permits men to sink, before he holds out a helping hand to them; our extremity is his opportunity. When Peter was within a few hours of his intended death, then, behold! God delivers him: pray also, that above all things there may be in your requests a faithful confidence, and that you may conclude them with an assured Amen; then God cannot deny the wish of the heart, as in so doing he must deny himself.”

Sometimss, indeed, a believer is apt to imagine, that the prevalence of sins, and abominations of a country, may be such, that God will not accept of any prayer, as a prayer; it is, says Luther, *as if the prayer recoiled*, and they very often find it extremely difficult to pray with

any faith or confidence; but instead of listening to these thoughts, they are to think that though they hear of, and see a great deal of detestable wickedness; yet there is also much good, which they do not see, but which God sees and knows; for the eye of the Lord is over all things, and from him no secret is hid: as he sees the evil, so also the good; but of both we frequently have not a right to view. Let them believe that there are still many secret wrestlers with God, whom they know nothing of; for it may be with many serious praying christians, as with Elias, who it is said, Rom. xi. 2. cried out to God, and complained against Israel, supposing himself to be the only person who had not bowed the knee to idols; whereas God informs him, that it was not in the earthquake, or the tempest, but in the soft gentle breezes that he talked to him, and shews *that he has reserved to himself seven thousand, who have not bowed the knee to Baal*; that therefore he should go his way and labour further among the people, and not pray against, but for Israel. Thus, we also are not to abstain from faithful intercession, on account of the prevalency of sin among us, and not to question our being heard; for though in Ezek. xiv. God says that *when he is resolved to chastise a land, he will not spare it, though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, and prayed for it, they shall only deliver their own souls*; ~~but~~ yet, who can say that God has irrevocably determined to punish and make desolate this land? this is an extraordinary procedure, at least God has not been pleased to reveal it to us; therefore we are to continue in general prayer, making intercession for all men, Jesus having given himself a redemption for all, and God would

would have all men to be saved; so that we are not to look so much to the sins of the nation, or extraordinary particular cases, as the general promise and example of Christ, as likewise that of the faithful, set before us in the scriptures: they continued praying in behalf of their wicked countrymen, though God had threatened to destroy them: of this we have a particular instance in Moses, to whom God himself says, Exodus xxxii. 9, 10, *I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people; now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot, and that I may consume them, and I will make of thee a great nation.* Now, even at this, no such thought arose in Moses, that God would absolutely destroy the people without regard to any intercession; far from it, he immediately fell to praying and interceding; and it is said, verse 11. *And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why does thy wrath wax hot against thy people?* And in the like manner he had frequently prayed to God, even after express menaces of exterminating the people; much more are we to pray for a sinful nation, God not having declared that he will absolutely destroy it. How fervently did Abraham also insist in behalf of the detestable city of Sodom? And yet was this importunity so acceptable to God, that he declared he would pardon both Sodom and the other cities, if only ten righteous persons were found there; and even for the sake of Lot alone God spared the town of Zoar, which otherwise would have been involved in the general catastrophe, Gen. xix. 21. Much more will God spare a town or country, and not give it into the hands of furious enemies, when not only one or two, but many

believers,

believers, make themselves as a wall by prayers and supplications, and stand in the gap; God looks out and seeks for them, as in Ezek. xxii. 30, 31. *Behold I sought for a man among them that should make himself as a wall, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none: therefore have I poured out my indignation, &c.*

Here we see that God would not have destroyed the country, had only one been found, who, like Moses, would have stood in the gap, and have interceded with earnest supplication; so when, according to outward appearance and our own conceptions, it seems as if God would not hear and help, as if he had turned away his gracious countenance from our land and nation; yet are we not to judge of God's heart from our conceptions, nor the melancholy aspect of our affairs; nor to cease from intercession; rather we are the more to humble ourselves, and the more (with Daniel) acknowledge our and the national sins, the more fervently to pray for grace and help, and like the Israelites, in Judges, say from our heart: *We have sinned; do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day*, Judges x. 15. Let it go hereafter as it will, only now shew us thy salvation. To be helped this time was all their request; and the Lord pitied and helped them. Herein we must farther observe, and learn this of these praying Israelites, that we are not to dictate to God, to tell him how soon, and in what manner, we would have him help us; but commit every thing to his wisdom and will, as these said, *Do with us as it pleaseth thee*; for God's will is always wise and gracious, always intends the best for us.

When,

When, in our prayers, we rely on his wise and gracious will, we remain quiet, however things go, and we see that of a certainty he hears our prayers; but if we would have his succour in such and such a manner, and at this and that time, and take it into our heads that things must go so and so, as most agreeable to the flesh, that we may be no sufferers by it, and afterwards come to be disappointed, then we are filled with perturbation, we have dark thoughts of God, and doubt whether our prayers are heard. Whereas this is a doubt not to be admitted, if we do but pray according to the will of God, with a believing heart, with a resigned devotedness to him, and more especially pray for such help as will most tend to the glory of his name, and the aggrandisement of his kingdom, that is, that he will protect his church and its members. This must ever lie close to our hearts, and imprint our supplications; and it is the best for ourselves that we glorify his gracious will, and say to one another,

Be all our fretful passions hush'd,
 Let each rebellious sigh
 Be silent at his sovereign will,
 And ev'ry murmur die.

If smiling mercy crown our lives,
 Its praises shall be spread,
 And we'll adore the justice too
 That strikes our comforts dead.

Thus are we to acquiesce in God, to be contented with his government and ways, and rest on his will alone, without wishing that this or that

that may come to pass according to our humours. We do not so much as know what is best for the welfare of the body, much less for the salvation of souls, and the kingdom of God; and certainly to this it is that both the calamity and the relief must be subservient.

And though the calamity continues, and so far from any proximity of help, according to appearance, the clouds thicken, and additional distresses come on, we are not to discontinue our prayer, not to be discouraged, but rather pray more fervently, more ardently, and ascend from one degree of prayer to another, from asking to seeking, from seeking to knocking, and at length God will certainly hear and help. To this purpose Luther says, in his *Table Talk*, that precious prayer supported the church; for prayer hitherto had done most for the church, and therefore prayer ought to be kept up. And Christ says, *Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you*. First, when we are in temptation, he will have us pray; for God very often shrouds himself, and will not be found; then we are to seek him, that is, to be instant in prayer; and when we seek him, he withdraws, as it were, into a closet, and to get access in there, we must knock; when one has given a knock or two, he hears a little; lastly, when the knocking becomes importunate, he opens, and says, *What wilt thou have?* Lord, say, *I would have this or that*. The answer is, *It is granted*. Here are, I believe, many pious people, who pray sedulously; but here are also, I fear, many clouds without water, many enemies to the cross of Christ; therefore mind this saying: prayer means asking, calling, seeking, knocking,

knocking, violent knocking, and this we are to be continually plying without ceasing.

For if we do not cease from praying, much less will God cease from hearing and helping us; our prayer being to him as a sweet voice, and as a fragrant odour, which ascends up to him in heaven; and, as the son of Sirach says, *pierces the clouds, and does not cease till the Lord looks into it.* Inward and outward calamities continue, so let us also continue in prayer; for it is not beginning to pray, one fleeting fit of devotion, but assiduity and perseverance, which at length obtains help. It is not one stroke which fells a tree, no, nor the first or second, but the last. If the first has contributed to the fall of the tree, without proceeding to the last, it would have been of no consequence. Thus all our petitions promote our relief, and not one is lost; yet must we hold on, else we render even our prayers fruitless. If our God long delays his help, this is not to be understood as if he will give us nothing, or very little, but that he will give us the more; for by this delay of his signal help, he only renders our hearts the more contrite or emptied of all self-merit, or earthly confidence, (and thereby renders us more apt for, and capable of, the gifts of his grace) he makes more room and place in the hearts for his gifts that we may be the more desirous of them, and afterwards make a better use of them. Thus he richly compensates for the delay, and does *abundantly above all that we ask or think!* and in external and bodily calamities displaying his glorious help, just at the time when the calamity is at its height, when all human help is at an end; for that is with God the proper season for the
exaltation

that may come to pass according to our humours. We do not so much as know what is best for the welfare of the body, much less for the salvation of souls, and the kingdom of God ; and certainly to this it is that both the calamity and the relief must be subservient.

And though the calamity continues, and so far from any proximity of help, according to appearance, the clouds thicken, and additional distresses come on, we are not to discontinue our prayer, not to be discouraged, but rather pray more fervently, more ardently, and ascend from one degree of prayer to another, from asking to seeking, from seeking to knocking, and at length God will certainly hear and help. To this purpose Luther says, in his *Table-Talk*, that precious prayer supported the church ; for prayer hitherto had done most for the church, and therefore prayer ought to be kept up. And Christ says, *Ask, and ye shall receive ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you*. First, when we are in temptation, he will have us pray ; for God very often shrouds himself, and will not be found ; then we are to seek him, that is, to be instant in prayer ; and when we seek him, he withdraws, as it were, into a closet, and to get access in there, we must knock ; when one has given a knock or two, he hears a little ; lastly, when the knocking becomes importunate, he opens, and says, *What wilt thou have ?* Lord, say, *I would have this or that*. The answer is, *It is granted*. Here are, I believe, many pious people, who pray sedulously ; but here are also, I fear, many clouds without water, many enemies to the cross of Christ ; therefore mind this saying : prayer means asking, calling, seeking, knocking,

knocking, violent knocking, and this we are to be continually plying without ceasing.

For if we do not cease from praying, much less will God cease from hearing and helping us; our prayer being to him as a sweet voice, and as a fragrant odour, which ascends up to him in heaven; and, as the son of Sirach says, *pierces the clouds, and does not cease till the Lord looks into it.* Inward and outward calamities continue, so let us also continue in prayer; for it is not beginning to pray, one fleeting fit of devotion, but assiduity and perseverance, which at length obtains help. It is not one stroke which fells a tree, no, nor the first or second, but the last. If the first has contributed to the fall of the tree, without proceeding to the last, it would have been of no consequence. Thus all our petitions promote our relief, and not one is lost; yet must we hold on, else we render even our prayers fruitless. If our God long delays his help, this is not to be understood as if he will give us nothing, or very little, but that he will give us the more; for by this delay of his signal help, he only renders our hearts the more contrite or emptied of all self-merit, or earthly confidence, (and thereby renders us more apt for, and capable of, the gifts of his grace) he makes more room and place in the hearts for his gifts that we may be the more desirous of them, and afterwards make a better use of them. Thus he richly compensates for the delay, and does *abundantly above all that we ask or think!* and in external and bodily calamities displaying his glorious help, just at the time when the calamity is at its height, when all human help is at an end; for that is with God the proper season for the
exaltation

exaltation of his glory, to manifest among the nations that it is God alone from whom cometh salvation.

Under the delay of the divine help we are not to grow fretful or timorous, nor doubt that our prayers will be heard ; but we are rather to cleave to the promise of God, and lay it more earnestly before him, as thus we, as it were, lay hold of God himself, and our assurance is far from being offensive to him ; for to revoke the word of promise does not belong to God ; no word of his is spoken in vain. He has said, *Whosoever asketh, shall receive*, Luke xi. 10. *What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive*, Mark xi. 24. The same is confirmed with an ingeminated asseveration, *Verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever you shall ask the father in my name, it shall be given unto you*. He cannot depart from his word, much less break his oath. O did we but believe in his word, and pray in faith, we should see his miraculous help ; wonders on wonders ! for what has not been frequently performed by the prayers of the faithful ? At the prayer of Joshua the sun stood still in the heavens ; and at Elijah's prayer the heavens were shut and opened, and a dead child was restored to life. Now St. James says, *Elias was a man as we are*, &c. He there sets the prophet to us as an example, that we might pray with the same proper faith as he. It is said that these were singular prodigies that God worked through these men. We very well know that all God's works in his kingdom of grace, are miracles ! the raising the dead, opening to us the heavens, or causing the sun of his grace to stand still and irradiate us ; yet all this can be obtained by faithful

ful prayer. So likewise let us but continue in supplications and intercessions, he will send wonderful help in war and other calamities; for he is the same God, who doeth wonders and mighty things; therefore no believers should be afraid to pray, or make little account of his prayer, as God himself, so far from despising it, counts all our sighs, and takes minutes of all our petitions; so that if a believer grounds his prayer only on God's promise, and the intercession of Christ, and thus continues instant in the supplication of faith, he can avail much: and thus may a single believer pray away a whole host, or be protected against them; for the Lord of sabbath; the God of armies, is with him, is his defence, and will provide him a Zoar or Pella, even though an army were assembled against him, as at the Red-Sea. Therefore, says Luther, in his *Table-Talk*, *A Christian believer is of great value before God, and his prayer of great power; for he is sanctified by the blood of Christ, and anointed by the spirit of God. What he prays for earnestly, especially with the unutterable sighs of his heart, is a loud impatient cry in God's ears, that must be heard; as he says to Moses, Exodus xiv. 15, Wherefore criest thou unto me?* Accordingly, though Moses, from an affectionate dread, the people being in extreme danger, could not utter a word, yet his sighs, his cries proceeding from the bottom of his heart, divided the Red-Sea, that the children of Israel passed dry-shod; and the same sighs brought together the tumultuous waters with such rapidity, that Pharaoh and all his host were swallowed up in it. This, and more, has been done, and still may be done, by sighs sent forth in true faith: for Moses did not know for what

and how he should pray, for he did not know how a deliverance could be brought about; yet he cried from his heart. Thus a sigh, in our account faint and insignificant, very much benefits us. And in another place, he says: Such a one should pray with such faith and earnestness, as if he could alone pray away the divine judgments; how much more by the joint prayers of many believers, shall the enemy's visitations and punishments be averted, or mitigated; at least the soul shall remain unhurt.

In the before-quoted work of an English divine, all the faithful are very earnestly exhorted to prayer, and every week to set apart one particular hour for that purpose, that in all places of the kingdom they may at the same time appear with their requests at the throne of grace, and lay the national calamities before the Almighty ruler of the world. This short, but very edifying * piece, shews, that, amidst the great falling away which the author pathetically deploras, there are still in England many earnest supplicants, many indefatigable wrestlers with God; and as by this writing they are further stirred up to prayer, I hope the Lord will again send help to that kingdom; and if other believers, in all Protestant places, would join with them, and be thereby likewise stirred up to greater earnestness in prayer, we might be sure of requisite help: *for the earnest, persevering, general prayer of the faithful, is always a sure fore-runner of relief.*

We also might set apart the same hour, namely, every Sunday evening, from eight till nine, as, in our town, already many servants and children
of

* The duty of praying for one another.

of God, particularly some devout students of divinity, have already made a beginning. One is not indispensably bound to a certain hour; yet it helps to strengthen faith, and imparts a joy and alacrity in prayer, to think, that at present, in this and that place throughout the whole empire, and even in all Protestant communities, the children of God, in this very hour, are on their knees praying for the divine assistance and relief to our churches, amidst this danger and the calamities of war. Now I being joined with them in the like supplications, the Lord will also hear my weak requests, as communicating with those of so many children of God; especially as our mediator and high-priest even prays with us, and for us.

If in this manner the children of God, throughout all the Protestant churches, presented themselves before the throne of God, and came together in the spirit, this would be the best congress for peace, and soon would God restore national tranquillity.

Thus should the faithful, by these wars and commotions, be moved to be more frequent in prayer, and reading and meditating on the word, and in the word, especially in the Psalms, will they find many comfortable solutions; and consequently make this calamitous war turn to the advantage of their souls, as they will be continually growing in a knowledge of God's thoughts of peace, and be more and more built up in faith; then, as David says of himself, they will, against all the power of their ghostly and bodily enemies, continually adhere to God in faith, continually be conversing with Christ their prince of peace, be continually learning to know him better,

better, and endeavour that the peace of God, amidst all the disturbances of the world, may rule in their hearts, and preserve their spirit and soul in Christ Jesus; and if this be their lot, then are they well kept, they have nothing to fear; then they are in Christ, in his heart, in his wounds, as in the true city of peace, and the Lord is himself as a wall of fire about them; he is their light and their salvation, that they may again say with David, *The Lord is my light, and my salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked, even my enemies and my foes, came upon me, to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell. Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in him will I be confident,* Psalm xxvii. 1, 3. To this faith and exalted manner of speaking they have the same right and warrant as David; for their God and Saviour is the same; they have the same word on which they are to rest, and all we have to do is to beseech God that he will give us faith, and strengthen it in us. *As his eyes are always towards the faithful,* our faith and confidence are acceptable to God; therefore it is that he has expressly enjoined us a filial confidence in him. We are to be strong in faith, not to be afraid, not to be cast down and troubled. Josh. i. 6. For by such faith we honour him, as the gracious, merciful, just, righteous, and Almighty God, and do him the most acceptable service. His acceptance of our faith is seen in the effects. He orders things to us according to our faith, so that by faith we certainly procure all the relief we stand in need of. Faith rests immoveable on the word of God, offers up in its prayers

prayers that word in which help is promised; and never is it's confidence disappointed, as it is said of the children of Reuben, Chron. vi. 20. *They cried unto the Lord in the battle, and he heard them; for they trusted in him.* This is one instance, among many, how acceptable faith and confidence is to God; they never cry in vain. The right prayer of faith indeed is in the name of Christ, through his spirit and intercession, and these cannot fail of being heard. Faith unites us to Christ, and then we are in him as in the beloved, are acceptable to God, and consequently also our prayers acceptable to him. That faith by which we become one with Christ covers all our sins, and consequently the defects of our prayers, and God imputes no guilt to us. This acceptance, this communion with God, amidst all the calamities of war, will despoil all fear and mistrust, and under all our weaknesses awaken us to a truly faithful, confidential, and a child-like prayer.

Believers ~~not only~~ remain continually in Christ, *not only* but likewise in daily contrition and repentance, not walking according to the flesh, so as to be governed by it; and thus there is no condemnation, no guilt in them; yet in such a time of war and other judgments, they endeavour to increase their daily circumspection and repentance; to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and still more strictly to renounce every seducement, and detach their heart from them; and thus have they the less to fear, for fear belongs only to those who will not deny themselves and dissent from the world, who will not put away the strange gods from among them, or detach their hearts from carnal objects; whereas he who willingly

willingly devotes himself to the Lord, who desires to be cleansed from all earthly attachments, and who mourns over any dominion, any motions of sin still stirring in his heart, makes Christ his refuge, and in faith prays for wisdom and strength to avoid every snare; such a one is safe, and where this happy disposition is general, the Lord will never correct such a nation in anger. The faithful likewise daily bewail their own sins, and those of others; they sigh for all the prevailing abominations, so that God will not permit them to be hurt by those plagues, with which he in others chastises such abominations. Further we know, from his own word, that he seals all those who sigh for the abominations of the world; so that the instruments of the divine vengeance shall do them no harm. For so it stands, Ezekiel ix. 4, 6. *And the Lord said unto him, go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof; and to the others he said, in my hearing, Go ye after him in my city, and smite; let not your eyes spare, neither have you pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; not one is to be touched. Agreeably also, Rev. vii. 3. Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads. And Jeremiah v. 1. Walk to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see and enquire and seek in the broad places thereof if ye can find a man, if there be any, that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it. Thus God makes enquiry who, (though he be weak) seeks after truth, and is desirous*

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sirs of believing aright, and executing judgment; and to such will God be gracious, will not overlook them, that they may not be swept away in the judgments which he shall send on the world. Thus believers are not to be afraid. *Shall such a one as I flee?* says the magnanimous Nehemiah, chap. xvii. Christ, in express words, declares, Matth. xxiv. 6. *When you shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, see that ye be not troubled.* This is a glorious promise, and a high privilege for faithful children of God, that in his judgments, and especially in the ravages of war, he distinguishes them from careless worldlings, Luke xxi. *There shall not a hair of your head perish, in your patience possess ye your souls.* But of worldlings he says, ver. 24. *Their hearts fail them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.* Before judgments worldlings heed them not, and in their vain merriments as it were defy them; but when the judgments actually declare themselves, then are they terrified, confounded and dumb, except for pusillanimous lamentations. On the contrary, the children of God, before the appearance of any judgment, do not indulge themselves in carelessness; many forebodings arise in them, but they only add spirit to their prayers; and when the judgments are on their land, then are they full of courage: for to the faithful children of God christ says, ver. 28. *When these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption (your help and deliverance) draweth nigh.*

When judgment was to fall on Sodom, it would have ill become lot to fear, for then his redemption, his deliverance was at hand; as 2.

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Pet. ii. 7. *He (God) delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked.*

Thus from the words of Christ, and likewise from many examples, we see what a great difference God makes, at the time of his visitations, betwixt the faithful children and worldlings: *Then they that feared the Lord comforted one another, and the Lord heard it, and marked it; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name; and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him; then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.*

And chap. iv. ver. 2. But unto you that fear my name shall the ~~seed~~ of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

And though in a general war and other distresses the faithful also may be sufferers; yet God shews his particular care of them, and supports them by more plentiful infusions of comfort and heavenly-mindedness, that if they are deprived of one thing or another, they still say with Job, and say it from the heart, *The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord, Job i. 21.*

I know thy judgments, Lord, are right,

Though they may seem severe;

The sharpest suff'rings I endure,

Flow from thy faithful care.

Yes,

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Yes, I will own 'tis good for me
 To bear thy threat'ning rod;
 Afflictions make me learn thy law,
 And live upon my God.

Thus is their faith and renunciation of the world truly secured, and a shining example held up to the public view, and the name of God is glorified in them. Of this I have, within a few days, received an illustrious testimony in a most excellent Lady, who has felt every calamity of war; parties of hussars and dragoons have ravaged her possessions three several times, and swept away not only what was in the field, but likewise in the barns. She has written to me in the following manner: " I had in the morning been reading the meditations on the xith of St. John, which at this time was particularly delightful and blessed to me. It is therein said, that when any new calamity comes upon us, we are to think the *master is come,* and calleth for thee. * I had scarce gone to

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* As this meditation may also administer comfort to others in the like exigency, I shall here insert it: the words the *master is come and calleth for thee* should be particularly attended to for our comfort; when we are surrounded with distress, let us think that our Saviour, as the right master for helping, is likewise come; for he himself hath said, I am with thee in distress; and in all our miseries, inward and outward, he will not drive us from him, or make us a raid of him, but rather call to us, that we may think as if it was likewise said to us, the *master is come, and calleth for thee; the master is come, and will help thee; he calleth, thou art to come to him, and thy calamity shall drive,*

" my husband and shewn him this passage, when
 " a party of hussars came thundering about our
 " house, and again took away all they could
 " carry; this was again on Friday. On the
 " Tuesday following came three hundred horse,
 " belonging to the foot, with a great many
 " waggons:

drive thee to him. Do not be discouraged, though the appearance of things be so strange that thou knowest not which way to turn thyself, and every thing goeth against thy thoughts and hopes; for it is certain that thy master and helper will come with relief in his hands; therefore Luther says, concerning the words, I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go, Ps. xxxii. 8, " I will give thee understanding, and direct thee in the way which thou shalt walk in, in which I would have thee walk. Thou prayest that I should deliver thee, do not give way to affliction, do not teach me, do not so much as teach thyself; leave thyself to me, I will be a sufficient master to thee, I will lead thee into the way that thou mayest walk acceptably to me." You think that all is lost, because things do not go as thou thinkest they should; but thy thoughts hurt thee, and hinder me: things are not to go according to thy understanding; but let thy understanding be folly to thee, then will I give thee my wisdom. The want of understanding here is genuine wisdom. Not to know whither thou goest, it truly to know the way thou shouldst go. Let my wisdom annihilate all the schemes of thy own wisdom. Thus Abraham went from his own country, not knowing whither; he divested himself of his own knowledge, and gave himself up to mine, and this led him the right way to the right end! Mark, this is the way of the cross, which thou canst not find; but I must lead thee, as a blind person is led; therefore it is not thyself, nor a man, nor a creature, who can set thee right. I myself will shew thee by my word and my spirit, the way wherein thou shalt walk; not in

“ waggons: these spared us as little as the former, so that our losses may moderately be computed at eighteen hundred rix dollars; and they have left us so bare of every thing, that we shall be under a necessity of parting with most of our cattle, at any rate, for want of fodder. Not a grain of oats is left us. They carried off a great quantity of hay likewise, and above sixty quarters of barley; but, under all

the path which thou chusest; not the suffering which thou imaginest, but what happens to thee contrary to thy choice, imagination, and desires. In this be my disciple, thither I call thee, this is the time, now is thy master come, and be not as a horse, or an unruly beast; follow me and forsake thyself: for, mark, I will wink to thee with mine eyes, I will not leave thee, thou shalt not sink, I will be mindful of thy concerns; thine eyes must be closed in regard to thyself, as my eyes are open upon thee. Hast thou not read, The eyes of the Lord are open to the righteous; and mount Moriah signifies the Lord will provide unquestionably, that I should imitate the confidence of Abraham, who believed against hope.

Thus when any suffering befalls us, let us immediately think our master and helper, the helper in all calamity, in all distress, is come; for distress is come, and thus he can declare himself, as the helper in distress! Distress is the fore-runner of him, and of his succour: thus no difficulty is to weaken our faith, it must strengthen it. We should think, well, here is a variety of distress come on me, then will the helper in distress also certainly come; he is already come, and will assuredly help me; he calls to me, he calls to me by these very calamities; for the calamity will teach me to pray, and drive me to faith and his word; and thus shall I be assuredly helped; both in prosperity and adversity it may always be said, the master, the helper is come, and calleth thee. See Leben Christi auf Erden, p. 540.

“ all our sufferings, still it becomes us to praise
 “ God, we have some corn left; it might have
 “ been much worse with us, had not the Lord
 “ over-ruled the hearts of the spoilers. This
 “ calamity even affords me matter of joy from
 “ my dear husband’s behaviour; he has resign-
 “ edly submitted himself, and says,

If I the pearl my own can make,
 Let who will the pebbles take.

“ May the precious Saviour, who hitherto be-
 “ friended us, prepare us likewise for what is to
 “ come; I promise myself no better times; and
 “ those words, Jeremy xlv. 5. which, long be-
 “ fore the war, made a strong impression on me,
 “ continue comfortable to me, and more I de-
 “ sire not! Instead of all our temporal loss,
 “ which this year unquestionably amounts to
 “ four thousand rixdollars, all we desire, all we
 “ pray for, is only faith. I have frequently
 “ thought, especially in reading the above me-
 “ ditation, and on the words, *If thou believest*
 “ *thou shalt*, &c. O may the Lord but grant
 “ to us faith as a mustard seed, such as beholds
 “ the glory of God; much more might still be
 “ taken from us, and we should still have no
 “ want: it is not improbable, but in the pre-
 “ sent situation of affairs, my husband may also
 “ lose his employment, and possibly every thing;
 “ *but the good part cannot be taken from him.* I
 “ rejoice when I am brought to believe that God
 “ is not angry with me, and that what has be-
 “ fallen us is not from wrath, but love. It like-
 “ wise gives me the highest pleasure, that God
 “ keeps my dear husband in peace and looking
 “ up

“ up to him in faith, and that the apprehensions,
 “ disturbance, and losses, have not affected his
 “ health. Flesh and blood indeed painfully
 “ feels any considerable diminution of worldly
 “ possessions, but to the soul this is very useful,
 “ and christians who believe in an eternal life,
 “ must pass through trials; for what would faith
 “ signify without trials?”

And all these trials will terminate in blessings and eternal salvation: as the children of God, and of the world, differ greatly in their behaviour under the judgments of God, so God likewise makes a very great distinction betwixt them; laying on none of the former more than they can bear, and by every thing intending to make them wiser for heavenly things; and they are seen on occasion to inherit the fortitude, the unshaken faith of the primitive christians, they even take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and still praise God as this blessed couple; whereas, the others murmur and revile.

Therefore believers who are in Christ, and can see God as their father in him, manifest themselves sons; but, by a victory over the world are to keep themselves above a servile fear, and not like the men of the world be *failing for dread and expectations of the things that are coming on*: and God says to his children and servants, *fear ye not their fear, nor be afraid as they are*; namely, the wretched worldlings, who before lived in jollity and insolence; but now in the time of calamity are full of fear, *fear ye not their fear, nor be afraid*; *sanctify the Lord, of sabbath, and let* *deborah* *him be your fear and your dread*; fear him with a filial fear, and be afraid of sin, as it is offensive to him. Whoever has this filial fear of God, need

need not be afraid of war or misfortune; he has a sure fortress, as, Proverbs xiv. 26. *In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and his children shall have a place of refuge.* they are likewise words of comfort, that the Lord himself is to the faithful a strong hold in the time of distress, Nahum i. 7. *And his name is a strong tower, whither they run and are saved,* Proverbs xviii. 10. Likewise in the xxth chap. of the 2d of Corinthians, and 20 h ver. *Believe on the Lord your God, so shall you be established; for whoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be delivered,* Acts ii. 21. Ye shall not only be delivered from the danger and calamity, but likewise from any fear, as David says, Psalm xxxiv. 5. *I sought the Lord and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fear;* for they who fear the Lord, are in his camp, and amidst his angels, as David says ver. 8. *The angel of the Lord* (that is the great angel of the covenant) *encampeth round about them that fear him, and he helpeth them.* He is a wall of brass, and with his horses of fire, and the holy angels, is about them, as once about the prophet Elisha! Though a host were encamped against us, yet is Christ, with the glorious host of holy angels, still nearer to us, betwixt us, and our enemies, as among the children of Israel! In this camp, in this city of God, when he is in the midst of them, in his wounds, in his heart, christians have a most secure fortress, and should be above any fear; but if they are seized with some fear, this only carries them with a greater earnestness to prayer and the word, and this effectually removes their fear; but on the return of any fear or calamity let us always say as in Hebrew x. 35. *Cast not away therefore your confidence, which has*
great

great recompence of reward. All these promises shall certainly be fulfilled; for if God fulfills his menaces, which he is averse from, much more will he make good his promises, this being what he delights in.

Believers are not to have a servile fear, not even of God himself, much less of any mortal creature. That believing children are not to have any servile fear of God, does not proceed from carnal security; no, the Lord in mercy preserve us from any such thing; but neither does it proceed from their own righteousness and piety, as if, though God should enter into judgment with them, he would find little or nothing in them which merited punishment; but hence it is that arises their superiority to any servile fear, *the Lord is their fear and dread*: they pray to be more and more cleansed from all faults, from every thing punishable, and as in the midst of all their imperfections, they make Christ their refuge; their joy is to be found in Christ, knowing that in him all their sins are covered. Another cause to which they owe their freedom from fear is, that God himself has given them the promise and the privilege of not being afraid, that they should not cast away their confidence, *for they have not received the spirit of fear to bondage, but the spirit of children, by which they cry Abba, dear father!*

They bear in their hearts the mark of testimony, the seal or pledge of their sonship, or eternal inheritance; and thus should believe, that God *will spare them as a man spareth his own son*; for if God for their sakes, for the sake of their prayer, founded on the intercession of Christ, spare other men, will he not spare them? And thus the faithful may assure themselves that God, in
war

war and other visitations, has only thoughts of peace towards them, and will certainly grant them the issue they hope for, as his elect, as they certainly call upon him in faith, he will certainly deliver them, and carry them safe through every difficulty; of this they are to be firmly persuaded, and not be staggered by any rumours of war, or terrifying articles in news papers! “ Allow-
 “ ing, says our late worthy Pastor Maier, in his
 “ sermon ca led *The certain Deliverance of the*
 “ *Elect*, allowing this news comes from such a
 “ capital, that the account has been sent from
 “ one great person to another, allowing it to
 “ be of the very latest date, what does all this
 “ concern you? Ye elect, are ye not stationed
 “ in another world? Is not your place called
 “ the bosom of God, God’s wing? Leave
 “ news to the world, yours are the best, and
 “ altogether certain; they were written in and
 “ from the residence of God, who has a watch-
 “ ful eye over his elect; they are as good as if
 “ their first date was of this day, and to-morrow
 “ they will be likewise as new as to-day, and
 “ after to-morrow the like; nay, they never
 “ grow obsolete, and the substance of them is,
 “ *God will deliver his elect, verily he will deli-*
 “ *ver them*; he hath declared it, and in that
 “ abide: though nations rise against nations,
 “ though calamities come on like a mighty tor-
 “ rent, well and good, God will deliver his
 “ elect; though this great terrible and Almight-
 “ y God should empty his arsenal, and draw
 “ forth all the instruments of his vengeance;
 “ whether thunder, hail, lightening, tempest,
 “ earthquakes; or on the other hand battering
 “ cannon, field-pieces, mortars, bombs, bul-
 “ lets,

" lets, grenadoes, sabres, or whatever they be,
 " can you suppose or conceive that this God,
 " who is your merciful father, intends therewith
 " to make war upon, or slaughter you his elect
 " children? no, nothing of this shall touch his
 " chosen; these are deliverances which they of-
 " ten stand in need of; for the world often keeps
 " them under too close a confinement, and by
 " no other means can their walls be made to fall
 " down. A king's son standing by his father's
 " side, and seeing his mighty preparatives for
 " war, would he tremble, or be afraid? Would
 " it not rather be a spectacle of joy? He knows
 " this artillery, these instruments of death, are
 " intended only agst inst the enemies, not the sub-
 " jects, much less the children. God's enemies
 " are all those who will not be elect, whatever
 " be their rank or country, God's friends are
 " the elect of whatever nation they be: these
 " elect are universal Philanthropists, without re-
 " spect of countries; therefore, themselves un-
 " hurt, they lament the visitations and calami-
 " ties of all men, they pray for all, but they
 " likewise believe that God will every where de-
 " liver his elect; and let this be their comfort."

Miserable mad world, thou wouldst not be warn-
 ed, and destruction is come upon thee as a whirl-
 wind, whilst the elect weep for thy calamities;
 but as to themselves the word of God is their
 comfort, no evil shall approach to hurt them.

If God has thoughts of peace to believers, tho'
 living in countries ever ran with war, and will
 protect them under the wings of his mercy, that
 no hurt shall befall their souls, much more has he
 thoughts of peace towards his whole church, his
 mystical body; and amidst all the destructions

raging on earth, he will not suffer it to be destroyed; he will rather build it up, beautify it, and enlarge it; for in Psalm xvi. where mention is made of the city of God, David shews that such destruction comes from God, as in ver. 9, 10. *Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made on the earth; he sendeth wars over all the earth; he breaketh the bow, and snappeth the spear asunder and burneth the chariots in the fire.* Here God does both, he alone maketh war to cease in all the world; but he also by war makes desolation, having, as judge, the instruments of punishment in his hands. Are these his doings, has he by his mighty arm wrought such destruction? This is highly comfortable to his church; for his own church and city it cannot be thought he will destroy, as therein are the most sacred dwellings of the most high God himself, being in them, and dwelling in them, as they dwell in him. The instruments of his judgments, whilst the city of God stands safe, shall destroy and remove those things which have hindered the building of it, and more room shall be made for the word, and work of God; for our Saviour, in war, most unquestionably girds his sword on his thigh, because of truth and righteousness, that truth may remain in truth, and that to the greater comfort of his people; that they may learn that God comes to the assistance of his word, that he as it were, proves his word: for as silence is often imposed on the word of God, or its admonitions disregarded, then, as in Hab. ii. 11. the ruins, the scattered stones, and the burnt beams shall preach repentance: then careless people see that the warnings and threatenings of God take effect; and thereby the servants of God acquire more freedom,

freedom, courage, and strength to proceed in their labour, and build up the city of God; but they, who by their erroneous doctrine and un-sanctified life, rather destroy than build up the city of God, are struck with silent dread at the terrors of the Lord.

They, the destroyers of the city of God, shall especially be destroyed and dispersed, and their places be filled up by builders, according to the before quoted place, *Isaiah ix. 16, 17. Thy walls are continually before me; thy builders shall make haste, but thy destroyers, and they that made thee waste, shall go forth of thee.* And it follows, in ver. 18, 19. *Lift thine eyes round about, and behold all these gather themselves together, and come to thee; as I live saith the Lord thou shalt surely cloath thee with them all as with an ornament, and bind them on thee as a bride doth; thy waste, and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction shall even now be too narrow, by reason of thy inhabitants, and they that swallow thee up shall be then far away.* They who as far as in them lies rather damage and destroy the church of God than build it, who detriment God's church by frivolous doctrines and immoral life, who turn piety to ridicule, who make a nick name of it, and temper it with enthusiasm, they indeed may well be terrified in wars and other judgments, when they find that no arts, devices, nor strength, merely human, can avail any thing against divine chastisement; for the greater stress one has laid on natural gifts, strength and stratagems, when danger and distress were afar off, the more faint-hearted are we when the danger is at hand; for when it is seen that God's word, faith, mercy and patience, are alone the true armour of God, the arms of the church

church, according to the old saying, *preces et lacrymæ sunt arma ecclesiæ*, i. e. Prayers and tears are the churches arms, and the prayer of christians still upholds the world, and keeps off many judgments, though the world makes them but very indifferent returns for it. "Christians (says Luther) are like the feet, which by their prayers must still support the world, but are trod in the filth of calumny, and are vilified by the world; yet in the time of distress these revilers desire their prayers, and wish to be in their stead."

Thus all things, even all judgments, must serve to build up the church of God, and promote God's kingdom and work; but first remotely, when God by his judgments clears the way, and removes all obstructions to the building of his church, and the enlargement of his kingdom: as, to build a new house, the old one must be pulled down, says the late doctor Spenser, in discoursing of the future amendment, and elevation of the church; and as its enemies leagued themselves against it, the judgments shall hasten their fall; and consequently, against their will, they shall make room for the church of God.

Also what seems totally to lay waste God's church and kingdom, must promote the increase and security of them. We know from the writings of the prophets, and especially from the Revelations, that in the last times the true church will suffer many persecutions, and the present strange combinations and events threaten us with various dangers. Whether they are a prelude to the great judgment, is known only to that God with whom there is no futurity! But what ever
time

time may be pregnant with, the true church of God shall remain entire; for it is not founded on any human dominion, however large and potent; but on Christ, the rock of ages, the corner stone, which cannot be moved, so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it! It is God, and not man, who is its aid and protector, and all the rancour and power of its enemies, instead of over throwing and destroying, shall only add a lustre to it, even when it seems to be quite oppressed and disfigured; the words in Micah xvii. shall be made good. *I will look unto the Lord, I will wait for the God of my salvation, my God will hear me: rejoice not against me, O my enemy, when I fall, I shall rise, when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me: I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth through the light; and I shall behold his righteousness; then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her, which said unto me, where is the Lord thy God: mine eyes shall behold her, now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the street; and it follows in verse 11. In time shall thy walls be built, and the word of God shall come forth. Thus in the latter time God's word, God's kingdom, notwithstanding the multitude of its enemies, shall come forth, shall be far spread out, and the city of God be gloriously built up; for God will gloriously manifest his care for his own kingdom, and his own city, that every thing shall co-operate to its appointed welfare. Therefore, whatever confusions may distract the kingdoms of the earth, and though every thing seems running into irretrievable ruin; yet the inhabitants of the city*

city of God shall in safety and a devout chearfulness, say, *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble; therefore will we not fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the agitations thereof, Selah.* Yet shall the city of God remain safe with its little brook, as in it are the holy tabernacles of the most high; God is in the midst of her, that she shall not be moved, God shall help her, and that right early; that is, at the right time, when the help will be most for our happiness, not only in outward peace and bodily prosperity, but more especially when thereby we shall be helped with the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, and to the true prosperity of our souls; for a help meerly external, by which our souls are not benefited, nay, which we are apt to abuse to the hurt of our souls, is not the help the city of God prays for. Therefore the Lord will provide a glorious and astonishing help, by which we shall be benefited in soul and body, and thus be doubly helped. Therefore we are not to be discouraged if the Lord delays his help, and conducts the same by ways unaccountable to us; for the heathen it is said in the 7th and 8th verses, *the nations, men of heathenish dispositions, tremble, the kingdoms fail, and the earth faints, when he uttereth his voice; but the Lord of hosts is with us (if we are willing to be with him) the God of Jacob is our refuge, Selah.* And that we may well observe it to our comfort and peace, not entertain any suspicions of the God of peace, but be resigned and quiet; it is repeated and enforced in verse 11. *Be still and know that I am God, I will*

will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted on the earth.

All this the Lord grant that we may see, that we may experience how he is exalted on the earth, and highly magnified among the great ones of his creation, that also he may be glorious and revered among us in all his works and judgments; and that at length we may rejoice in his astonishing help, and praise and glorify him in time and eternity—Amen.

Once more, as in the beginning was shewn, that all faithful ministers it behoves, as builders of the city of God, to awake at the various judgments of the present times. I have, for a conclusion, together with some preceding intimations, before my eyes a remarkable testimony of a late worthy minister; particularly for awakening those, who in modern times have lately gone, or may go, from our city into the ministry, that by the prayer and supplication, by the sedality and disinterestedness of such in the city of God, the divine judgments, as far as in them lies, may be mitigated, and not increased.

We have not a meer empty hope, which to the world might be h subject of ridicule, but have a full knowledge from the clear promises of God; that the city of God, after great judgments, shall at last be gloriously built; and this animates and strengthens us, that we will work indefatigably, while it is day, towards the future amelioration and enlargement; and as Doctor Spener expresses himself, spare posterity, and work for posterity, who will be benefited by our labours, though but small.*

In

• *Though through the present vitiated taste the labour*

In this present and future building up the city of God, he makes use of faithful labourers, and workmen who do not seek their own honour, their temporal profit and advantage; but those things which are of Jesus Christ, his honour, and the salvation of mankind; this, and nothing else. Now we, as having formerly sat at the feet of our late professors here, know how those chosen instruments sought only the things of Jesus Christ, and were so blessed in building the city of God, that their blessing has extended itself to the whole church, and certainly will continue to the end of days, for they have also worked towards the future amelioration and enlargement of the city of God, and sowed what their pious successors will reap! We have heard even from their own own mouths, the glorious things which have been preached in the city of God, and experienced them in our hearts. O that all who can no longer hear them, may therefore the more diligently peruse their edifying works, and tread in the almost defaced footsteps of our blessed fathers*; that

bours of many worthy divines, and even the scriptures themselves are slighted, there will come a time when men will loath these futile things which afford no nourishment, no wisdom to the soul; as they will see, that in the hour of distress and temptation, or in the approach of death not a single drop of real comfort is to be found in them; and then will they in a very short time such books as hold forth Christ to them, and do not leave their souls banished.

* That these writings may be continued in their salutary use, they are read in the retirement of the Orphan-house at meal times; by which many are not only richly instructed, but may from thence form a plain edifying discourse, which the weakest capacities may understand; and

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that of the teachers, who in late times have gone from hence, or of the present or future students of divinity, it may not be said as in Judges xi. 10. *And all that generation were gathered to their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel: and the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim, and forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers.*

Now if in the outward church or city of God, not only among the commonality, but among those who are or would be teachers and builders, another generation arises, which knows not the Lord, has not that true knowledge of him which is wrought by the Holy Ghost, and is not instructed to the kingdom of God, is not taught of God, but who values itself on human literature without any real solid conversion; nay, which holds pernicious and contradictory opinions, as that a man may be qualified to be a pastor, or bishop; may be a superintendent; and give wholesom food to his flock without any conversion, i. e. without any wholesom food in himself; and who like the foolish virgin goes no further than external decors, a pharisaical outside; and thus, when according to Christ's words, the salt, wherewith his people are to be seasoned, is itself without savour, and God may complain: *From the prophets of Jerusalem is profaneness gone out into all the Land.* When they who should be the champions

and where they, who look down with contempt on these plain salutary writings, have such a dark perplexed mode of preaching, that the common people, who, in all places make the majority, understand little or nothing of their boasted eloquence; by such preaching, how can the city of God be built?

pious for God, and wage war against satan and the world, effect the character of subtle controvertists, and even militate against true children and servants of God, and bring them under injurious suspicions; when they who should be luminaries, guides, and instructors to others, are themselves blind and erratick, yet conceit themselves endowed with transcendent parts, and a superior sagacity, and by so many people, especially the younger, are in effect held to be of an infallible judgment. I say, when this is the case, when so many ecclesiastics call darkness light, and light darkness, these are in reality the greatest spiritual judgments, and the greater, as not acknowledged to be such; palpable darkness is stiled clear light, and never was more talk of a discerning age.

To these spiritual judgments, which, in several parts, are come on the churches of God, on account of their ingratitude towards the gospel; now succeed bodily judgments, as wars and other visitations; and even to the flame of war many academical professors and divines have carried fuel: Now God lights up another candle, and it is the distresses of war which first open the eyes of many; and thus, *per crucem iter ad lucem*. The like chastisement fell on the Israelites, when another generation rose up among them, and they forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers; as in the before quoted second chapter of Judges, ver. 14. 15, *And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of the spoilers, who spoiled them, and sold them into the hands of their enemies round about; so that they could not any longer stand before their enemy. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the Lord was against them, for evil, as the Lord had said,*
and

and as the Lord had sworn unto them, and they were greatly distressed. Now that, among us, a strange generation, which does not know the Lord, may not arise and increase to the multiplication of both bodily and spiritual judgments—it behoves us, as it is all we can do, very particularly to pray that God will disappoint and amend all mercenary hirelings; and prepare in all universities and send to his harvest faithful, irreproachable labourers, who do not seek their own; and to this end let us well observe the exhortation of Dr. Suro, now deceased, in his funeral oration of late worthy abbot Breithaupt:

“ O my dearest colleagues, of whom, on this
 “ occasion, I see an unusual number, how can
 “ I forbear, at this recent and singular pattern
 “ of Christian fortitude, to exhort and encourage you and myself in the name of the great
 “ shepherd Jesus Christ; possibly there is not
 “ one of us who has not been instructed in true
 “ divinity by this eminent professor; it is also
 “ to be hoped that there is none among us, to
 “ whose heart the bishop of our souls, Jesus
 “ Christ, has not exceedingly blessed the service
 “ of this chosen instrument. I am, for my own
 “ part, assured in my heart that his noble firmness is manifest to all our consciences. Can
 “ we all of us look upon this blessed person as
 “ our faithful teacher and guide, and have we
 “ found him such even to the end? O how
 “ necessary is it then that we should now take a
 “ right view of the period of his life, and in
 “ the presence of the all-seeing God resolve immoveably to follow his faith, that as he is our
 “ glory, so likewise we may be his glory in the
 “ day of the Lord Jesus. Very alarming are
 “ the words which we read of the sons of that
 “ great

" great man of God, Samuel, 1. Sam. viii. 3.
 " And Samuel's sons walked not in his ways, but
 " turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and
 " perverted judgment. Melancholy is the ap-
 " pearance of our days, that many, great num-
 " bers of the sons of our spiritual father do not
 " walk in his ways; but turn aside after covet-
 " ousness, and barren worldly wisdom, and yet
 " persuade themselves that they see farther into
 " things, and make a greater progress, than
 " their enlightened father, whose fruitful labours
 " are now crowned with ineffable rewards.*
 " O brethren, join with me in supplications to
 " God, that he may be merciful to us, and gra-
 " ciously help us, that we may be found chil-
 " dren, and not abominations. It concerns us,
 " it is our particular duty, that having lately
 " seen

* Whoever desires wisdom from above, will be pre-
 scribed to, is docile and humble, and like a child and good
 scholar, desires to tread in the ancient foot-steps of the
 primitive fathers of the faith; but he who relishes
 earthly wisdom beyond the heavenly, beyond Christ and
 his word, is proud and disdainful, soon comes to have
 a high opinion of his own wisdom, and conceits that he
 sees farther into things than his experienced teachers;
 and this, in all times, has done great damage in the
 church of God and therefore all students of divinity
 should apply themselves more to the study of the Bible,
 mixing with it prayer and supplication, than to acquire-
 ments, as therein they will be helped to the best discharge
 of their office; and therefore the late Dr. Spenser, in
 one of his letters says, there is no better, there is scarce
 any other way of drawing lively and active geniuses
 from the love of scholastic theology (which after being
 ejected by the blessed Luther out of his church, has, I
 don't know by what misfortune in many places found a
 back door to creep in at) than by instructing them to
 exercise themselves in the sublimest study, namely, that
 of

" seen so many faithful servants of God go to *faithful*
 " their rest, we should endeavour, according to
 " the grace which God offers, to make up this
 " remarkable decrease. To this we are directed
 " by the word which we heard from them; to
 " this we are encouraged by the shining exam-
 " ple they have left us. Thus, and only thus,
 " shall we have joy in that day, when we shall
 " appear together with them before the presence
 " of the Lord Jesus. For all the witnesses of the
 " truth, and the power of Jesus Christ, which
 " God has placed before our eyes, shall in that
 " day, if we have not benefited by their word
 " and walk, bear witness against us, and in-
 " crease our eternal shame. Now then if there
 " be any among us whose heart tells him that
 " he is one of those who do not walk in the way
 " of truth, whom the love of the world, a car-
 " nal temper, and the blindness of human wis-
 " dom have enticed to false opinions and ill
 " courses, let him now enter into himself, seek
 " grace, life, and strength from him who is the
 " way, the truth, and the life; and in the
 " power of the Lord from this time forward in-
 " cessantly emulate your late teacher, that be-
 " fore our Lord Jesus Christ, and at his glorious
 " appearance you may be his joy and crown. 1.
 " Theff.

*of the Bible, and to lay out their whole strength in it. From this mixture of the holy scripture, and the Aristote-
 lian philosophy, has been produced a monster, which has
 laid waste the Lord's field, that the greatest benefit
 which can happen to the church is the preservation of
 divinity unsophisticated by any human inventions, and
 established only on the dictates of the divine spirit. O
 blessed time which is consecrated to this single meditation!
 O blessed they who more and more apply themselves to
 it, and thus sedulously attend to the one thing necessary.*

* Theff. ii, 19. O be no longer as a reed tossed
 “ to and fro with the wind, and do not in the
 “ least question the happy issue of such a pious
 “ enterprize. Consider what a cloud of wit-
 “ nesses we have before and about us, who to
 “ the end have fought a good fight, and held
 “ fast the word of faith, in the power of God.
 “ Heb. iii. 14. 2. Theff. i. 2. Who can doubt
 “ of the possibility of a thing to which God,
 “ even in our time, sets so many seals; think
 “ how beyond all contradiction this is verified
 “ by the triumphant constancy of the blessed
 “ Breithaupt. O may the remembrance of this
 “ valuable man of God powerfully affect us!
 “ may it loudly call out to every one of us, *Be*
 “ *stedfast*, dear brethren, and *immoveable*, *al-*
 “ *ways abounding in the work of the Lord, for ye*
 “ *know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*”

Would we, amidst such remarkable times of
 war, truly awaken ourselves, and tread in the
 footsteps of our old spiritual fathers; that is, not
 rely on insufficient earthly wisdom, but chiefly
 make use of the true weapon of faith, and ap-
 proach the throne of grace with confidence and
 prayer, a way would be made for us through every
 obstacle and calamity; we should behold the
 glory of God, our hearts would even be ecstasied
 with the radiancy of it. That we may be thus
 blessed, let us conclude with a prayer of one of
 those pious fathers:

O God, let thy majesty and glory fill our
 hearts, and be thou alone great in our souls. O
 what shame belongs to us that thou art so little
 known in thy glory by sinful creatures! and
 though thou alone art high, thou hast hitherto
 been low in our eyes. O give us thy holy spirit,
 and

and through it declare thyself in us, and impart to our souls great strength, that we may duly receive the word which we hear and read; by it be drawn to thee, and be eternally united with thee. Gracious and just God, we pray thee, particularly in these menacing times, thou wilt in mercy look down on all Christians, and particularly Germany; have pity on it, O God, and behold the continual effusions of blood. It is of thine anger, O God, that we perish thus, and by thine indignation so many thousands are swept away, and countries are exhausted of their inhabitants; these are the effects of thy displeasure, O Almighty God, and thy displeasure we have drawn on ourselves by our sins, and had it not been for thy clemency, we should all long since have perished; it is to thy patience and mercy that we owe our continuance on the earth, therefore we offer up our praises to the riches of thy goodness. In our safety we acknowledge thy long-suffering, and humbly supplicate thee to give us grace not to abuse it, nor obstinately provoke thine anger. Above all things we pray that thou wouldst incline the hearts of kings to peace, reconcile them, and suggest means for bringing about an equitable and lasting peace, that the nations of the world may no longer learn war. O great God, that instead of such armies which shed blood, and bear the slaughtering sword, thou wouldst, according to thy gracious promise send troops of evangelists, bearing the two edged sword of thy word, that by them mankind might be brought to repentance, turn from their sins, and be made partakers of thy glory! O merciful and just God, may thy kindness and faithfulness be seen in this our country, and give us to see the end of these tumultuous times, which at present

sent seems to be totally hid from our eyes; be merciful to all who are under the stroke of thy judgments, may they be sanctified to them; may they see the vanity and sinfulness of their former lives, and humble themselves under thy mighty hand! Grant likewise that every one among us, together with all others who are within the verge of thy visitation, may take an account of their whole lives, and implore thy mercy in Christ for their innumerable debts. May all and every one commune with themselves, lay before thee all their sins for remission in Christ, not omitting it till they are summoned and condemned at thy tribunal; but let every one secure his salvation by true repentance and conversion. Ah! Lord, let them not rest in a few transitory good motions, which last no longer than the rod is over them, but may every one shew himself stedfast and earnest in seeking thee with their whole heart, and turning to thee in constant holiness of life. O eternal God, fountain of all good, may this prayer come before thee into the habitation of thy holiness; may it ascend as incense before thy throne. Hear us, O God, though we are unworthy; hear us in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; hear us for the sake of thy glorious and holy name, and may it be exalted in the greatness of thy mercy. Grant also, O God, that after thou hast inclined thine ear to our requests, we may not forget to thank and praise thee, but from our hearts magnify thee, and shew forth thy praise in our lips and whole lives. This grant for thy infinite love in Christ our Lord. *Amen, Amen.*

T H E E N D.

E R R A T A.

- Page 1, line 2 from the bottom, for *home* read *house*.
- P. 17, l. 9, for *affliction* read *affliction*.
- 24, l. 8, for *loose* read *lose*.
- 27, l. 24, for *Franks* read *Frank*.
- 28, l. 5, the same.
- 31, l. 2 from the bottom, for *tallonis* read *talionis*.
- 36, l. 4 from the bottom, for *from* read *form*.
- 56, l. 21, for *ia-ward* read *inward*.
- 61, l. 12, for *was* read *was*.
- 62, at the top, insert, *whereas if only two or three are killed*
- 68, blot out the uppermost line.
- 70, l. 7 from the bottom, blot out *but as*.
- 72, l. 17, for *not* read *not*.
- 76, l. 4 from the bottom, for *are Grace* read *of Grace*.
- 77, l. 14, for *Sabbath* read *Sabaoth*.
- 79, l. 3, for *indispensibly* read *indispensably*.
- 81, l. 22, after *believers*, insert *not only*.
- 84, l. 18, for *son* read *sun*.
- 89, l. 4 from the bottom, for *Sabbath* read *Sabaoth*.
- 95, l. 21, for *the* read *thes*.
- 104, l. 12 of the notes, for *acquirment* read *acquirement*.
- 105, l. 1, for *faituful* read *faithful*.